

Counter-Revolutionary Violence: **Bloodbaths in Fact and Propaganda**

By Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman



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PREFACE

The American public will be slow to connect My Lai to Watergate, and yet that link is embedded in the political consciousness of those who are guiding the destinies of this country. Just as the Watergate burglaries of the Democratic National Committee headquarters were but a stitch in the fabric of illegal and criminal government, so My Lai was no more than a particularly horrible example of the American 'game plan' in the Vietnam War. The gruesome sequence of atrocity, frantic cover-up, unintended expose, hypocritical expression of humanitarian concern by commanders and rulers, and desperate public relations efforts to confine the blame to the triggermen is manifest in both settings.

Americans are fascinated by the Mafia, but very few citizens of this country believed until recently that the brutalities and deceptions of organized crime were also characteristic of government operations. We can be thankful, I suppose, that the United States government is not yet as efficient as the Mafia (whose skill has been built up over generations and whose personnel have been conditioned from birth) when it comes to hiding the traces of their crimes, cutting short the investigative trail, and screening out the occasional honest and principled operative.

This monograph by Noam Chomsky and Edward Herman, both renowned and careful scholars who have struggled over the years to present the truth about the Vietnam War, makes a major contribution to our understanding of the present posture of American foreign policy in general and the character of the persisting involvement in Indochina in particular. Their account of the role of falsification in official presentations of facts and interpretations designed to maintain public support and discredit anti-Vietnam criticism is part of a larger canvas of distortion that is characteristic of U.S. policy toward poorer and less fortunate peoples throughout Asia, Africa, and Latin America. The specific subject of this book is the systematic manipulation of the facts surrounding war atrocities, but its implications are far broader. Such manipulation of horror stories seems cynical beyond easy belief, even for those of us who have gradually become hardened critics of government behavior.

Chomsky and Herman document beyond serious question the extent to which the United States government has engaged in and hidden crimes on our side in the Indochina War and fabricated a bloodbath myth to explain why we must continue to kill on a massive scale. Such a pattern of double deceit intends to convince the American public that we fight as men of conscience to protect our threatened friends from a horribly cruel enemy who is poised to massacre.

Professors Chomsky and Herman present convincing evidence on four principal concerns:

First, that this double deceit has been a systematic element in the official policy of our government over the years of American involvement in Indochina, although it has been carried to new extremes of blatancy during the Nixon presidency.

Secondly, that this pattern of distortion is imposed so effectively that it even envelops most citizens who oppose the war.

Thirdly, that America's world role as chief sponsor of counter-insurgency enterprises in the Third World has led beyond the distortion of information and included active participation, directly and indirectly, in the actual perpetration of atrocities.

Fourthly, that these morbid realities of distortion and participation have led to a widespread poisoning of the language of political discourse and the overall ethics of governance, making the public swallow official lies and numbing euphemisms about bloodletting of the innocent as integral to national security.

Indeed, it almost seems as if a prominent war critic loses his credibility if he questions or rejects official orthodoxy on questions of atrocity and bloodbath. It is noteworthy that such widely acclaimed and influential war critics as Bernard Fall and Frances FitzGerald blandly transmit official deceptions on such issues as the land reform purge of 1956 in North Vietnam or the 1968 Hue massacre. I do not mean to suggest that these usually reliable authors are willing instruments of such deceptions, but only that the official lie has been told so commandingly that it is troublesome for even honest and dedicated journalists to set the record straight. It is also well to acknowledge that the real facts are so provocative on these touchy issues that most efforts to depict them offend mainstream readers and reviewers and encourages the ironic reaction that a particular author has gone "overboard" and is no longer to be trusted. It is positively Orwellian to appreciate that one's credibility as a war critic has depended more on adhering to official falsehoods than on their documented exposure and correction.

What is at stake here is more than the possibility of reasoned discourse in a liberal democracy. The veil of secrecy and deception used to invert the identity of criminal and victim in Vietnam also underlies the basic pattern of American involvement everywhere in the Third World, and, as well, characterizes government relations with minority peoples in the United States. It remains almost impossible to make this case of pervasive distortion in any influential forum and, as a consequence, there is almost no present hope of repudiating these most reprehensible aspects of American foreign policy. The people who brought us the Indochina War are each day quietly achieving the same disastrous results in a score of other hapless countries around the world. Chomsky and Herman make it clear that this wider orbit of terror, sponsored and financed by Washington, persists even in Vietnam despite the illusion that we have ended our involvement there. And who would dare speculate confidently on the extent of our role in the daily horrors inflicted on opponents of repressive regimes in such countries as Greece, the Dominican Republic, Brazil, Uruguay, South Korea, Thailand, the Philippines, South Africa, Iran?

Richard Nixon is a President who claims that it is a prerogative of his office to bomb foreign countries day after day in secret, to falsify Defense Department reports, and then to authorize "national security" wiretaps on his highest aides when such information is leaked to the press. Even now, amid the furor over Watergate, Nixon refuses to disclose the grisly statistics on sorties, tonnage, and targets in the Cambodia air war. Perhaps we can understand President Nixon's reluctance to release information by considering the explanation given by Mrs. Merry Dawson for her son's (Capt. Donald Dawson) unwillingness to pilot any further B-52 missions over Cambodia: "He felt they weren't bombing anything but people." The long history of Congressional and public acquiescence in the distortion and suppression of truth has

taken its toll. One consequence is that all elements in the governing process are disabled and the polity as a whole dispirited. The moral rot is so widely dispersed by now that it seems likely that a full revelation of the ugly truth about American bombing in Cambodia would be greeted by one more shrug of the shoulders, as if genocidal policies are just about what we have come to expect from our leaders. Unless we can overcome this sense of helplessness and indifference there is no prospect at all that the forces of evil which have held sway for so long can be removed from power, or at least dissuaded from following their impulses.

Indeed, when we audit the bloody balance- sheet of counter-insurgency, as Chomsky and Herman have done, we realize that "the White House horrors" associated with the domestic "pacification" work of "the plumbers" is virtually benign by comparison to the catalogue of White House horrors we ignore or accept as routine in foreign relations. Surely Nixon's list of enemies is child's play compared with the monthly execution lists of the Phoenix Program in South Vietnam. There is a danger - I wouldn't yet describe it as a plan - abetted by those sensible men who write editorials and headlines for the New York Times, that we will mobilize all of our moral energies of disgust and reform in relation to the Watergate agenda while practically winking at our official complicity in the bloody deeds of our friends and helpmates in repressive regimes around the world.

In addition to worrying about the exact dimensions of Richard Nixon's involvement in the Watergate burglary - which in this wider perspective can be dismissed as "a third-rate burglary" - we should insist that a Senate Select Committee also examine the compelling charge made against Nixon by Prince Norodom Sihanouk:

We formally accuse him of being the sole person responsible for the war ... He is the arch criminal with the death of tens of thousands of Cambodians on his conscience.
(New York Times, July 12, 1973)

Not to mention tens of thousands more in Thailand, South Vietnam, and North Vietnam! In light of such grim realities, the "gentleman's agreement" between the White House and Congress to go on bombing Cambodia until mid-August 1973, reeks with a stench of degeneracy far stronger than anything contemplated by the debased minds of Segretti, Hunt, Liddy, et al.

The main purpose of Chomsky and Herman is to expose in convincing form the Big Lie as it has been told by the United States government in relation to atrocities. This Lie has been told by our leaders because they were either embarrassed by the truth or fearful of its political consequences. According to John Dean, Nixon's anxieties were capable of being aroused on one occasion by a lone demonstrator in Lafayette Park. But the issue cannot be disposed of by reference to the condition of Mr. Nixon's psyche. John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson are deeply implicated in the double lie that allows us to go on and on killing innocent people in distant lands with a clear conscience. From what hidden reserves of national decency can we find the strength to face this awful truth? And what can we possibly do about it? There are no easy answers, no prospect of a "quick-fix," but this monograph provides firm ground.

July 1973 Richard A. Falk Hardwick, Vermont

INTRODUCTION

'Bloodbath" is a familiar word to Americans. Commonly, the term is applied to describe alleged enemy acts of violence and terror against civilian populations - past, present and prospective (in the event that our side did or does not triumph). In the official version of recent Vietnamese history, for example, only we and our spunky Saigon ally have stood between the 17 million people of South Vietnam and a bloodbath by the barbarian hordes of North Vietnam (DRV) and their southern arm, the Vietcong. The impression conveyed in the standard media fare is one of humanitarian concern for the victims of "violence" on the part of American leaders; the public has been led to believe that American policies in Vietnam have been shaped to some degree by the resort to violence and threat of a bloodbath on the part of others.

Even a cursory examination of recent history, however, suggests that concern over violence and bloodbaths in Washington (in Moscow and Peking as well) is highly selective. Some bloodbaths seem to be looked upon as "benign" or even positive and constructive; only very particular ones are given publicity and regarded as heinous and deserving of indignation. For example, after the CIA-sponsored right-wing coup in Cambodia in March 1970, Lon Nol quickly organized a pogrom-bloodbath against local Vietnamese in an effort to gain peasant support. Estimates of the numbers of victims of this slaughter range upward from 5000 [1] and grisly reports and photographs of bodies floating down the rivers were filed by western correspondents. The United States and its client government in Saigon invaded Cambodia shortly thereafter, but not to stop the bloodbath or avenge its victims; on the contrary, these forces moved in to support the organizers of the slaughter, who were on the verge of being overthrown.

The small-scale and "benign" Lon Nol bloodbath, of course, was followed by a much more substantial "constructive" bloodbath mainly in the form of firepower carried out by the United States and its Saigon affiliate. In the words of one observer with an intimate knowledge of Cambodia [2]: Cambodia has been subjected in its turn to destruction by American air power. The methodical sacking of economic resources, of rubber plantations and factories, of rice fields and forests, of peaceful and delightful villages which disappeared one after another beneath the bombs and napalm, has no military justification and serves essentially to starve the population. Refers to footnotes appearing at the back of this module Those who paid close attention to the American slaughter of Cambodians in 1970 would have had no reason to be surprised by the intensive bombing of heavily populated civilian areas in a last-ditch effort to save the collapsing U.S.-backed regime three years later. This was simply a minor variant of a policy, consistently pursued in Cambodia, which President Nixon has called "the Nixon doctrine in its purest form." [3]

The regularly publicized and condemned bloodbaths, whose victims are worthy of serious concern, often turn out, upon close examination, to be fictional in whole or in part. These mythical or semi-mythical bloodbaths have served an extremely important public relations function in mobilizing support for American military intervention in other countries. This has been particularly true in the case of Vietnam. Public opinion has tended to be negative and the war-makers have had to strain mightily to keep the American people in line. The repeated resort to fabrication points up the propagandistic role that the 'bloodbath" has played in Washington's devoted attention

to this subject. The evidence on myth creation (discussed below) also makes obvious the fact that stories emanating from this source, whether produced by the military, intelligence, or state-affiliated "scholarship" should be evaluated by the standards and methods normally employed in assessing the output of any Ministry of Propaganda.

The great public relations lesson of Vietnam, nevertheless, is that the "big lie" can work despite occasional slippages of a free press. Not only can it survive and provide valuable service regardless of entirely reasonable and definitive refutations [4], but certain patriotic truths also can be established firmly for the majority by constant repetition. With the requisite degree of cooperation by the mass media, the government can engage in "atrocities management" with almost assured success, by means of sheer weight of information releases, the selective use of reports of alleged enemy acts of atrocity, and the creation and embroidery of bloodbath stories and myths. These myths never die; they are pulled from the ashes and put forward again and again, although repudiating evidence is readily available. For example, the New York Times has given significant space to claims of mass murders by the North Vietnamese and the National Liberation Front (NLF) at Hue twice within the last year - the first claiming with assurance 5700 murders, the most recent 2800, and neither citing any specific source of evidence. [5] As we show below, this myth is concocted from the confusion of many deaths and mass graves (the bulk apparently occupied by victims of "allied" firepower) and the deliberate mistranslation and misinterpretation of documents by the Saigon - U.S. propaganda machine. But with the New York Times' concept of "balance," official lies are entitled to their fair share of space. In general, this amount of space usually is rather more substantial than that allotted to the low-keyed refutations that may be permitted to present the "other side" of the question. With this balance of opinion, plus official domination of news releases and run-of-the-mill editorialists and columnists, atrocity myths can be institutionalized.

At the same time, our own atrocities can be dismissed as the "unintended consequences of military action," [6] or as an historical inevitability for which we bear no responsibility [7], or as "isolated incidents" for which the guilty are punished under our system of justice. The more fanatic state apologists can thus conclude from the Vietnam experience that [8]

...there are nations more civilized than others, for reasons of history and providence however freakish. We would not, in America, in this day and age, treat prisoners of war in the way the Vietnamese did. And we are, however humbly, reminded that we fought in Indochina to repel the atavistic forces that gave historical and moral justification to the torture and humiliation of the individual.
More balanced minds perceive that "unfortunately, the record is not unflawed" and that "the highest United States authorities cannot escape responsibility" for certain "violations of the spirit if not the letter of international law...even if the violations were not expressions of official policy" - while insisting, to be sure, that the "damning indictment of the Vietnamese communists...cannot be erased by the pious denials of the North Vietnamese or their apologists in this country" and that a compelling case can and should be made against the North Vietnamese for their clear violations of the Geneva Convention of 1949 [9]

A discussion of the machinery of atrocities management and the reasons for its continued success is beyond the scope of this monograph, which has a more modest

purpose. We attempt here to establish, first, that bloodbaths are not necessarily considered bad in the perspective of the American leadership; they may be unremarkable, benign, or positively meritorious. A large proportion of the really huge bloodbaths of the past two decades, in fact, have been viewed in this light by Washington (with some directly administered or indirectly engineered). It seems to us an elementary and obvious truth that the leadership in the United States, as a result of its dominant position and wide ranging counter-revolutionary efforts, has been the most important single instigator, administrator, and moral and material sustainer of serious bloodbaths in the years that followed World War II.

After presenting some illustrations of benign and constructive bloodbaths, we turn to some of the nefarious and mythical bloodbaths that have played important roles in the defense of U.S. intervention in Vietnam. We examine in particular the relative levels and strategies of violence employed by Saigon, the United States, and the revolutionary forces, the 1955-56 events in North Vietnam, and the Hue massacres of 1968. Finally we discuss the intensifying repression and threat to political prisoners in the charnel house the United States has built in South Vietnam - an illustration and application of the now long standing U.S. policy of support for 'constructive' bloodbaths.

BENIGN AND CONSTRUCTIVE BLOODBATHS

Post-Colonial Rot and Counterrevolutionary Terror

The response of American leaders to bloodbaths has been related closely to the nature of the victims and executioners and the political consequences seen as flowing from the massacre and terror. In the Third World, where the United States has set itself firmly against revolutionary change since World War II, it has tried to maintain the disintegrating post-Colonial societies within the "Free World," irrespective of the drift of social and political forces within those countries. This conservative and counterrevolutionary political objective has defined the spectrum of acceptable and unacceptable violence and bloodshed. From this perspective killings associated with revolution are bad, nefarious and perhaps also mythical - and represent a resort to violence which is improper and unethical as a means for obtaining social change. Such killings are carried out by "terrorists." The word "violence" itself is generally confined to the use of force by elements and movements which we oppose. An AID report of 1970, for example, refers to the improving capability of the South Vietnamese police, certainly the most extensive employers of torture in the world, as "preventing the spread of violence." [10] And the 1967 "moderate scholars" statement on Asian policy, sponsored by Freedom House, defended the U.S. assault on Vietnam and, by implication, the mass slaughters in Indonesia, at the same time explicitly condemning those who are "committed to the thesis that violence is the best means of effecting change" (presumably the NLF, DRV and the Indonesian Communists). [11]

Bloodbaths carried out by counter-revolutionary forces are regarded in a different light as they are in the interest of a return of Third World populations to that desirable "measure of passivity and defeatism" such as prevailed before World War II [12], also commonly referred to as "stability," [13] or "political equilibrium." Killings undertaken to return these populations to passivity are rarely described as bloodbaths or as involving the use of violence - they are "readjustments" or "dramatic changes" tolerated or applauded as necessary and desirable. This is true whether the bloodbath destroys both the organizational apparatus and the population base of radical movements (as in Indonesia), or kills more modestly, merely disorganizing and terrorizing a population sufficiently to permit rightist totalitarian rule (as in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala or Brazil [14]), or falls somewhere between the two extremes (as in the case of the U.S. effort in South Vietnam).

That revolutions are costly in human life and that those undertaking them should weigh these heavy costs against any potential gains is a conventional cliche. Less attention has been paid to the enormous human costs that have resulted from "stabilization" and counterrevolutionary attempts to forestall revolution. On the evidence of the past two decades of U.S.-sponsored counterrevolutions, a good case can be made that these are far more bloody, on the average, than revolutions. This is conspicuously so where modern technology is put to work in direct counterrevolutionary intervention. Here the indiscriminate violence puts into operation a feedback process of "Communist creation" that affords the intervention legitimacy in the eyes of the imperial power while at the same time giving it a genocidal potential.

Beyond this, of course, are the even larger human costs of "success" in keeping Third World populations in the desired state of "passivity and defeatism," such as has been achieved in, say, the Dominican Republic or Guatemala. In these countries, there has

been a restoration of the corrupting dependency on a foreign power, rule by a reactionary exploiting elite, social polarization, degradation and insecurity for large numbers, and a low level of morale and cultural esprit. [15] In North Vietnam, which had the misfortune to fall into the "iron grip" of Communism, the fighting qualities of its armed forces and the failure of the society to show the smallest signs of disintegration under the most ferocious assault in history have been a puzzle to western analysts. In seeking the sources of strength" of the DRV, Rand specialist Konrad Kellen recently noted the absence of any "signs of instability," the lack of "resort to the kind of pressure against their population in the North that might have alienated the people"; and he concludes that "the Hanoi regime is perhaps one of the most genuinely popular in the world today. The 20 million North Vietnamese, most of whom live in their agricultural cooperatives, like it there and find the system just and the labor they do rewarding." [16] The contrast with Free World controlled areas of South Vietnam is startling. [17]

Or consider Greece, where "the Sixth Fleet looks more and more like an extension of the regime and occupying army"; [18] where the survival of the junta is a continuing problem as it jockeys between force, external support, and opportunistic maneuvers, relying upon 'domestic pacification, foreign investment, American tolerance, martial law, a dilating police force, purges of the professions, media control and military hardware." A great many people (Greeks, that is) don't like it in Greece, and a labor shortage is widespread with 10% of the work force (much of it young and able) having emigrated during the last five years. And while talking of "cultural purity," the Colonels have placed great emphasis on encouraging tourism, diversification via "eye-popping incentives" to foreign capital, and a huge influx of an American commodity-culture mix. [19] But Greece represents "stability," and its torture chambers have been bothersome to American leaders mainly because they have furnished ammunition to critics of our unswerving support for this incompetent little tyranny.

It is a notable fact that in the Third World countries subjected to a heavy U.S. hand and thereby kept within the Free World, graft, corruption, and the amassing of huge fortunes by the leadership of the collaborating elite have been uniform phenomena (in Indonesia, Thailand, the Philippines, South Korea, the "new" Cambodia, Laos, the "old" China and Taiwan, and South Vietnam). In the case of Chiang Kai Shek's "old China," General Stuwell's lengthy experience with the Kuomintang led him to the oft-expressed conclusion that they were simply "gangsters," who believe (accurately it turned out) that they can "go on milking the United States for money and munitions by using the old gag about quitting if...not supported." [20] As Kolko remarks, "No serious account of China during the period 1942-1945 differs on the proposition that the corruption and venality of the ruling elite was its sole consistent characteristic." [21] A study of \$43 million in U.S. savings certificates and bonds put up for sale in October 1943 showed that the bulk was in the hands of Kuomintang leaders: T. V. Soong held \$4.4 million; K. P. Chen, \$4.1 million; H. H. Kung \$1.4 million; and so forth. [22]

The Philippines show the same pattern. A recent *Business Week*, in expressing scepticism on the likelihood that Marcos will stamp out corruption, notes that [23]

the President and his close associates are hardly free from suspicion. Since taking office seven years ago as a man of relatively moderate wealth, Marcos has become one of the Philippines' top ten taxpayers. In a country with its share of multimillionaires, that is not bad on his official salary of \$4,500 a year. It is also well known that Marcos has demanded that he and his associates in the government be cut in on the profits of local businesses.

And in the case of South Vietnam, huge fortunes were being made by comprador elements even before the escalation of 1965 brought in really large resources capable of being stolen. General Khanh, leader of the South Vietnamese state by American choice for a brief period [24] in 1964, and an expatriate shortly thereafter, prided himself on his restraint in having built up an estate of only \$10 million prior to his exit. [25]

In the official American view, all of this is treated as a rule of "Asian nature." As pointed out recently by Donald Kirk, Far Eastern correspondent of the Chicago Tribune, "Kim [a South Korean poet] blames the suffering of his people in large part on the kind of bribery and chicanery that American officials smilingly dismiss as 'routine' in 'all Asian countries' -notably those allied with the United States." [26] Both Kim and the American officials are right, as the "Asian nature" familiar and relevant to the Americans is of those willing to cooperate with the imperial powers in suppressing revolutionary nationalism and maintaining Free World control. Under U.S. auspices, the native leadership consists of carefully selected elite military and comprador elements who, if capable of meeting American criteria, are likely to lack social vision relevant to their own country and any basis or capacity to mobilize large numbers of their compatriots. [27] By the nature of the policies and interests they must pursue in order to meet their external sponsor's demands, their constituency almost certainly is going to be a reactionary and privileged local elite (plus the dominant foreign power). Their ideology centers in a negative and single-minded anti-Communism, which is what brings them into symbiosis with the U.S. leadership in the first place. Their solutions to national problems-invariably consistent in general outline with the desires of their sponsor-place heavy weight on free enterprise and external aid and the importation of huge amounts of foreign capital. [28] (It is a small irony, although perfectly understandable in a functional context, that Richard Nixon, of self-reliance fame, should be attracted so uniformly to Third World leaders whose specialty is international welfare and blackmail!)

Forcible repression of the revolutionary forces is a natural for the Colonels to whom the dominant power gravitates. Not very sophisticated as social analysts despite their schooling in Panama and Washington, D.C., and chosen for the purity of their anti-Communism, these creatures of imperial policy uniformly interpret revolutionary ferment as the product of a Communist conspiracy that must be forcibly suppressed. They espouse no positive social values and offer no constructive solutions to the critical problems of poverty and under-development. Often crass opportunists or outright plunderers, invariably associated with corruption, they rule by force. Their armies and police, quasi-mercenary forces trained, supplied, often paid and directed by the United States, lack social purpose, motivation, and discipline -- still another factor reinforcing bloodbath tendencies. Restraints coming from the dominant power tend to be minimal; in fact, bloodshed is facilitated by the generous supply of weapons, and even advanced prison and interrogation methods. The dominant power may, in fact, be outdoing the client and mercenary forces in bloodletting.

The general point involved here has not gone unnoticed by the more astute theorists of counterinsurgency. Bernard Fall, writing in the early 1960s, raised the relevant question and provided a partial answer: [29]

Why is it that we must use top-notch elite forces, the cream of the crop of American, British, French or Australian commando and special warfare schools; armed with the very best that advanced technology can provide; to defeat Viet-Minh, Algerians, or Malay "CT's" (Chinese terrorists), almost none of whom can lay claim to similar expert training and only in the rarest of cases to equality in fire power?

The answer is very simple: It takes all the technical proficiency our system can provide to make up for the woeful lack of popular support and political savvy of most of the regimes that the West has thus far sought to prop up. The Americans who are now fighting in South Vietnam have come to appreciate this fact out of first-hand experience.

The Americans indeed did come to appreciate this fact, and they now are facing the familiar problem once again in Cambodia. The lesson is obvious enough, though it is almost never drawn by American political commentators, who continue to maintain a pose of self-righteousness even as they deplore the "errors" or "blunders" that led to this or that catastrophe. This pervasive inability to perceive the meaning of the facts that Fall cites, and that are now even more overwhelmingly evident, gives revealing insight into the nature and quality of imperial attitudes and ideology.

Thailand: A Corrupt "Firm Base"

An illustrative case of great current relevance is Thailand, which emerged from World War II as the only state in Southeast Asia whose military leadership had collaborated with the Japanese to the extent of declaring war on the United States and Great Britain. Immediately after the war U.S. officials refused to go along with the British desire to dismantle the apparatus of military power in Thailand. Thereafter the U.S. gradually increased its support of the military faction. As a result, after but a few years of constitutional rule characterized by "temporizing" support of democratic forces by the U.S., the military were able to reestablish full control, and Phibun Songkhram became "the first pro-Axis dictator to regain power after the war.... [30] Phibun quickly mastered the art of extracting both moral and material support from the American cold warriors ("milking," to use Joe Stilwell's earthy reference to Chiang), constantly creating alarms of external and internal Red threats, encouraging local newspapers "to denounce the United States so that his government could appeal for more American aid on the grounds that it would help to pacify this 'anti-American' segment of public opinion"[31]; and, of course, serving as a loyal agent of his North American supporters in SEATO and elsewhere.

In the apt language of the NLF's description of the Diem regime and its successors, this was a "country-selling government" in the Orwellian perceptions of Washington officialdom, however, this all reflected the free choice of the Thai people ("Thailand [sic] decided to adopt collective security as the basis for its foreign policy.") [32] Phibun used the diplomatic support, money and arms provided by the United States leadership as his primary source of political power in Thailand, frequently timing his violence against his opponents to "coincide with an important meeting of the SEATO alliance, thereby minimizing local and foreign criticism." [33] As the Thai police state

consolidated itself and became both more bloody and more corrupt, American support was in no way diminished and criticism by American leaders, public and private, was minimal. In fact, "a notable trend throughout this period was the growing intimacy between the Thai military leaders and the top-level military officials from the United States." [34] Legion of Merit awards were given to three Thai generals in 1954, and in 1955 Phibun himself was given a Doctorate of Laws at Columbia University, and the Legion of Merit award by Eisenhower for his services in "the cause of freedom." Vice President Nixon referred to Thailand's "dedication to freedom," while New York Governor Dewey was most impressed with the "settled, orderly situation.. a steady improvement toward stability." [35]

When attention is called to the fact that Thailand under U.S. auspices has been a military dictatorship, the official response has been to point to "encouraging" political trends. If none can be dredged up at a particular moment, "Asian nature" and customs are cited, along with the need to preserve Thailand's "independence." Those who are still more cynical contend that it would be "arrogant" (Rogers) for us to intervene -- God forbid that we should ever descend to it -- and impose our views on other people. At the time of Ambassador Leonard Unger's appearance before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee in 1969, a constitutional facade was in fleeting existence, and he was greatly encouraged by this development, which "rounds out a system in which the people of the country feel that they do have representation in Bangkok [36] But if their democracy is not quite like ours, the Thai people "have their own conviction about the better system of government, about how representation should be carried out. ..and I personally believe it would be a mistake for us to try to lecture them on the operation of democracy." [37] Our lectures in fact have been accolades to the military dictators, and to fend off criticism at home, philosophical observations on Asian nature have been coupled with the plea that it would be arrogant of us to intrude into the internal affairs of these "independent" states. In fact, however, our impact and influence have been continuous and decisive in helping the military faction to extinguish the constitutional regime of 1946-7 and to consolidate its rule thereafter.

The large inflow of U.S. aid and arms, which totalled in excess of \$2 billion between 1949 and 1969, in the official (Unger) view, helped Thailand "to improve its internal security forces so that it will be better able to meet the guerilla and terrorist threats which have been mounted by the Communists." [38] In reality, throughout this period, until the American invasion of Vietnam in 1965, the Communist "threat" in Thailand was slight and the obvious and predictable use and effect of this aid was to establish a police state and suppress the substantial non-Communist opposition.

Another facet of the official mythology and propaganda regarding arms aid is that it "contributed to Thailand's economic growth by enabling Thailand to devote a greater share of its resources to economic development." [39] Awkwardly, however, between 1954, the year of the SEATO treaty, and 1959, the value of Thai military expenditures rose by 250%. This is explained by Unger as a result of growth stimulated by military aid, which provided "an expanding income some of which could be devoted to security expenditures." [40] But Thai income per capita in 1959 was well below the levels of 1950-1952. [41] Control by an internally unconstrained military junta, dependent on the largesse of an external sponsor engaged in an anti-Communist crusade, is the key to this huge expansion of military outlays in a country with pressing development needs.

Rising security expenditures were part of the total package of aid-armament-repression that was immensely advantageous to the Thai military elite and at the same time met the requirements of the selectively benevolent tutelage of the American cold warriors. In this package the military leaders of this "land of the free" (Dulles) not only were able to rely on U.S. support to establish and control a police state, but also with virtually no restraint were permitted to convert their political power into graft and monopoly income, including significant contributions by the American taxpayer. From 1948 onward they "took over the directorships of banks, private companies, and government corporations, and they diverted large amounts of public funds to themselves." [42] Each military leader developed a huge private income to finance his own political organization. Police Chief Phao (U.S. Legion of Merit, 1954) "derived most of his funds from the opium trade," while army chief Sarit (U.S. Legion of Merit, 1954) got the proceeds of the national lottery. [43] At his death in 1963 Sarit left a fortune of approximately \$140 million, a matter disclosed only as a result of relatives squabbling over the booty. [44]

A substantial fraction of American aid almost certainly went into the pockets of the military junta, sometimes revealed "in the extensive travel and luxuries they enjoyed after fleeing the country." [45] Darling suggests that the military leadership of Thailand was able to siphon off for their personal use a staggering 12% of national income.[46] The acceptability of this huge plundering to the American leadership can be interpreted as recognition of the "Asian nature" of the elements who could best serve cold war ends (the same people, in this case, as could best serve the aims of the Japanese co-prosperity sphere during World War II), and the necessary costs to the American taxpayer of purchasing the services of these "patriots."

Bloodshed by the Thai military junta in consolidating its police state was substantial, but was not noticeably disturbing to its sponsors. Truman's ambassador Stanton was particularly energetic in urging even more vigorous repression, and "frequently encourage Phibun to be alert to the allegedly increasing signs of Communist subversion among intellectuals, students, priests, and writers." [47] After a 1957 coup, according to Darling [48]:

It was also discovered that the police chief [Phao, opium trader and recipient of the U.S. Legion of Merit award] had been much more ruthless in suppressing his political opponents than formerly assumed. Some of his atrocities rivaled those of the Nazis and the Communists. The graves of Nai Tiang Sinkliand and four unidentified persons were uncovered in Kan bun province, and further investigation revealed that these victims had been strangled to death while being interrogated by the police. Tiang had been a courageous leader in the Free Thai movement during World War II and later served in the National Assembly. Phao claimed that the former Free Thai leader had escaped from Thailand and joined the Communists. [49] The deaths of other victims of the police were also investigated, but the extent of the torture and murder committed by the former police chief will probably never be fully known.

One of the "major assets" of the police chief was "the extensive assistance he received from the American-owned Sea Supply Corporation which enabled him to build the police force into a powerful military organization which was better led, better paid, and more efficient than the army... By 1954 American assistance enabled Phao to

increase the police force to 42,835 men or one policeman for every 407 people. This was one of the highest ratios between policemen and citizens of any country in the world." [50] The pattern has a familiar ring.

The benefits to the American leadership from this support of a bloody and corrupt tyranny were simple and decisive. For American money and help in preserving their power and filling their pockets, this military clique was willing to subordinate its foreign policy to that of the United States [51], serve as agent and errand boy, maintain an "open door" to American economic interests, and allow the use of Thailand as a base for U.S. counterrevolutionary intervention in Southeast Asia. Immediately following the Geneva Accords of 1954 the National Security Council laid out a plan for subversion throughout Southeast Asia, with Thailand "as the focal point of U.S. covert and psychological operations," including "covert operations on a large and effective scale" throughout Indochina, with the explicit intention of "making more difficult the control by the Viet Minh of North Vietnam [5~ The toleration level of U.S. leaders for graft, torture, and bloodbaths by "patriotic leaders" willing to defend their independence against Communist aggression by serving as a firm base" for their sponsor's activities, is large.

The acquiescence of American leaders in depredations of friendly military juntas extends beyond mere graft and local bloodbaths; it carries to the point where they will support and cover up for activities involving serious and direct damage to the American citizenry. The most interesting illustration of this has been Washington's long-term alliance with and toleration of heroin traders. It is another small irony that the defeat of one of our instruments of "stability," Chiang Kai Shek, with the resultant "shut down of China's vast illicit market with the change of governments there in 1949," is listed by the U.S. Bureau of Narcotics as the most important event in the postwar history of the heroin trade. [53] But the slack was taken up by leadership elements in each of America's remaining Asian satellites. We have already noted Thai police chief Phao's heavy involvement, but a very important part was also played by Kuomintang, Lao [54], and South Vietnamese generals and high-level politicians. [55] The epidemic of heroin use that struck American GIs in South Vietnam in 1970 and continued thereafter was a direct result of the extensive trade in the American protected Golden Triangle, and the aggressive sales campaign among the GIs carried out by pushers who were protected by the South Vietnamese police and army, and who worked as part of an apparatus in which Marshal Ky and other South Vietnamese officials had long been involved. [56] While using "any means possible to protect the Thieu regime from investigation of its involvement in the heroin trade," the Nixon administration has at the same time been "dumping" back into the United States one or two thousand CI addicts per month on grounds of their having "negligible value to the United States Army." [57] The CI addicts may well be fathering a generation of junkies, and the rich sources of heroin protected by Washington have found new routes to the United States. The American leadership, in brief, is quite prepared to accept as "benign" a huge drug addiction toll among Our Boys (as well as large numbers of secondary home population victims)- although controlling addiction and protecting Our Boys are both allegedly first priority for Washington-in pursuit of "stability" and the preservation of Third World comprador regimes and "firm bases."

Benign and Constructive Bloodbaths: East Pakistan, Burundi, and Indonesia

Bloodbaths carried out by counterrevolutionary regimes ordinarily are given very little attention in the U.S. mass media. Thousands have been slaughtered by the Rightists installed and/or supported by the United States in Guatemala [58] and the Dominican Republic [59], but even a sharp media watcher would have to be alert for the small back-page items in which these events are hinted at. The huge rape and slaughter of Bengalis in East Pakistan carried out by West Pakistani military forces in 1971 was given greater publicity, however, and a small segment of the American public became aroused and active in opposition to American policy in this area. This resulted in part from the sheer magnitude of the massacres, which one authority described as "the most massive calculated savagery that has been visited on a civil population in recent times." [60] For the Nixon administration, nevertheless, this was a "benign" bloodbath, and its scope and brutality failed to deter Washington from continuing military and economic aid to the government engaging in the slaughter. This was a bloodbath imposed by a friendly military elite with which U.S. authorities had a traditional affinity -- "notorious in Mr. Nixon's case" as Max Frankel pointed out [61] -- and American policy "tilted" toward Pakistan just enough to maintain the friendly relationship with the ruling junta required by U.S. strategic planning for the Persian Gulf and South Asia. [62] Consequently the matter was purely internal" [63] to Pakistan, the bloodbath was benign, and Washington was "not nearly so exercised about Pakistani suppression of the East Bengalis as about what they saw as Indian aggression against Pakistan." [64]

During the spring and summer of 1972 as many as 250,000 people were systematically murdered in Burundi by a tribal minority government that attempted "to kill every possible Hutu male of distinction over the age of fourteen." [65] According to an American Universities Field Staff report on Burundi, which U.S. officials judged accurate, the extermination toll included [66] ..the four Hutu members of the cabinet, all the Hutu officers and virtually all the Hutu soldiers in the armed forces; half of Burundi's primary school teachers; and thousands of civil servants, bank clerks, small businessmen, and domestic servants. At present (August) there is only one Hutu nurse left in the entire country, and only a thousand secondary school students survive.

The Prime Minister of Belgium advised his cabinet as early as May, 1972 that Burundi was the scene of "veritable genocide," and in June the term "genocide" began to appear in State Department internal memos and cables. Yet after a small news flurry in June, and speeches on the subject by Senators Kennedy and Tunney, the U.S. press and Congress lapsed into virtual silence. [67] In confirming a new ambassador to Burundi in June, 1972 the Senate Foreign Relations Committee showed itself to be not only uninformed on the history and recent events in that country, but also quite unconcerned with the massacre. [68]

A recent Carnegie Endowment study of American policy toward the Burundi massacres states that "the United States has still not uttered a single public word to describe the immensity of the crime against humanity in Burundi -- or to condemn it." [69] Although the United States buys 80 per cent of the main export crop (coffee) of Burundi, at no point in the unfolding of the massacre was a threatened or actual withdrawal of this fundamental support to the massacre leadership ever considered. [70] In fact, no serious or potentially effective action was taken by the United States government, despite its detailed knowledge of events in Burundi (kept out of the

public domain insofar as possible), and despite an internal memorandum prepared within the African Bureau that suggested a U.S. legal obligation to act in the face of massive abuses of human rights. [71] The Carnegie study observes [72] that this was ..one of those rare episodes in recent American foreign policy in which the ostensible humanitarian concern of the United States had not collided with competing interests. In Bangladesh, the human disaster had been subordinated to Washington's relationship with Pakistan and the tangled secret diplomacy with Peking. In Biafra, relief seemed choked not only by the politics of a civil war, but also by a State Department policy which placed more value on good relations with the regime in Federal Nigeria. Yet there appeared to be no comparable interests in Burundi to weigh against the human factor.

In the end, however, the relevant considerations were the absence of significant American political or economic interests, along with "the conviction in the African Bureau that avoiding the disapproval of African states was more important than the human lives or the international legal issues in Burundi." [73] This was an unremarkable, or benign bloodbath.

The huge massacre in Indonesia 1965-69 provides the most impressive demonstration of the U.S establishment's response to a major bloodbath where the political results of the slaughter are regarded as "positive." During the Indonesian counterrevolutionary bloodbath of 1965-66, at a minimum several hundred thousand men, women and children were butchered summarily in cold blood, with the estimated numbers of victims running up to a million. [74] The army played a key role in this holocaust, doing a large part of the killing directly, supplying trucks, weapons and encouragement to para-military and vigilante death squads, and actively stimulating an anti-Communist hysteria that contributed greatly to wholesale mass murder. This slaughter was described by the anti-Communist Indonesia expert Justus M. van der Kroef as "a frightful anti-Communist pogrom where, "it is to be feared, innocent victims of mere hearsay were killed" (as opposed, presumably, to the guilty Communist men, women and children who fully deserved their fate). [75] In 1968 there was a renewal of mass executions, and in one single case in early 1969 army and local civic guards in Central Java "were said to have killed some 3500 alleged followers of the PKI by means of blows of iron staves in the neck." [76]

During this period of massacres, the number of political prisoners, almost invariably untried and often maltreated, ran from a minimum estimate of 70,000 to well over 100,000. Similar numbers remain imprisoned today, untried and with little prospect of trial. [77] The rule of law was (and still is) suspended for the purposes of this continuing bloodbath and mass incarceration, according to van der Kroef, it was a period of "endless and often arbitrary arrests, brutalization of prisoners, and an atmosphere of distrust in which exhibitions of violent anti-communism are believed to be the best way to convince suspicious local military of one's bona fides." [78]

Meanwhile, this land of mass murder and huge concentration camps has become "a paradise for investors." [79] Following the "showcase contract" with Freeport Sulphur (which included, among other things, a lengthy tax holiday), things tightened up a little, but applications for licenses to exploit Indonesia's mineral resources increased rapidly. Speaking at a news conference held in the Wall Street offices of International Nickel Company in July, 1970, a high official of the Indonesian government pointed

out that foreign capital was showing great confidence in his country's ability to resist nationalization pressures. [80] This investor appeal has not been noticeably affected by (and has gone hand in hand with) the "rampant corruption in the bureaucracy and the armed forces... . Some foreign investors bidding for concessions find that they have to pay huge bribes." [81]

All things considered, then, the developments of the past seven years in Indonesia have been favorable to the predominant interests of the Free World. Appropriately, therefore, the American response to the holocaust proper was restrained. No Congressman denounced it on the floor of Congress, and no major American relief organization offered aid. [82] Media treatment of the events was sparse with the victims usually described merely as "Communists and sympathizers." Little mention was made of the large numbers of women and children massacred or the modes and details of the slaughter. For the leaders of the United States this bloodbath was a plus. In a Freedom House advertisement in November, 1966, signed by "145 distinguished Americans" including Jacob Javits, Dean Acheson, Thomas D. Cabot, Harry Gideonse, Lewis E. Powell, Whitelaw Reid, Lincoln Bloomfield and Samuel Huntington, the events in Indonesia were treated as follows. 'It [the Vietnam intervention by the United States] provided a shield for the sharp reversal of Indonesia's shift toward Communism, which has removed the threats to Singapore and Malaysia.' [83] And in the statement on Asian policy sponsored by Freedom House and signed initially by 14 leading "moderate" political scientists and historians, the series of events that included the huge Indonesian bloodbath were described merely as "dramatic changes" implicitly constructive in character, although these scholars, as noted earlier, condemn "violence" as a mode of achieving social change. [84] This humanistic treatment was paralleled by that of the late Prime Minister of Australia, Harold Holt, who told the River Club of New York City in July 1966 that "with 500,000 to 1 million Communist sympathizers knocked off, I think' it is safe to assume a reorientation has taken place." [85]

Late in 1972 General Maxwell Taylor explained to U.S. News and World Report that "Indonesia's independence today and its relative freedom from an internal Communist threat is attributable, to a large degree, to what we've accomplished in South Vietnam." With large U.S. forces moving into Vietnam the Indonesian anti-Communists "were willing to run the risk of eliminating President Sukarno and destroying the Indonesian Communists." [86] That's all. It apparently does not even occur to this "military adviser to four Presidents" that there might be any moral issue in "destroying the Indonesian Communists." This was a constructive bloodbath. The victims, once identified as Communists, have lost all claim to humanity and merit whatever treatment they received. Since the result is the preservation of a neo-colonial economic and social structure and an "open door" to American investment, only sentimentalists will moralize over the bloodbath. America's academic, business and political leaders must turn their attention to more serious matters.

Repacification in the Philippines

There is no better illustration of the promise that American policy holds for Southeast Asia than the case of the Philippines, the only official U.S. colony in Asia for half a century and now, once again, the scene of a rising insurgency. Filipino nationalists had declared their independence from Spain in 1898, only to be jolted with an extended American war of counterinsurgency, complete with massacres of civilians,

depopulation campaigns, burning of villages, and the other appurtenances of pacification. In those less cynical days American commanders openly admitted their intention to turn resisting areas into a "howling wilderness." [87] The problem faced by the American conquerors was well expressed by General J. Franklin Bell, who explained that "practically the entire population has been hostile to us at heart." Thus it was necessary to terrorize them into submission, keeping them "in such a state of anxiety and apprehension that living under such conditions will soon become unbearable" and their "burning desire for the war to cease" will ultimately "impel them to devote themselves in earnest to bringing about a real state of peace...[and]...to join hands with the Americans." [88] Hundreds of thousands of Filipinos were pacified permanently in this early exercise in winning hearts and minds.

After the defeat of Japan in World War II, the Philippines were granted technical independence under the rule of a conservative oligarchy closely linked to the U.S. and with the pre-war colonial economy restored. The first President was Japanese collaborator Manuel Roxas, reinstated by General MacArthur under the pretext that he had been a double agent. The Philippine Communist Party (PKP), which had been in the forefront of the anti-Japanese guerrilla struggle, attempted "to enter the Philippine political arena legally through a front political party, the Democratic Alliance (DA)," but "failed, as DA-elected members of the Philippine Congress were denied their seats..." [89] The insurgency that followed was suppressed with extensive American aid. As Jonathan Fast observes, the Philippine counter-insurgency effort of the early 1950s served as a laboratory for later American involvement in Vietnam," where General Lansdale "tried to repeat his Philippine success with Ngo Dinh Diem." [99]

The salient features of this "success are described by van der Kroef: "declining real wage rates [91], persistent extreme disparities in income levels, the seemingly unchecked power of private U.S. capital (especially in the context of the operations of a few Filipino family corporations)" [92]; and "graft and corruption prevalent everywhere, but particularly in government, whose machinery of justice was felt to benefit only the rich." [93] The Philippines had evolved into a virtual gangster society, dominated by a tiny and very wealthy elite, including the U.S. favorite Ferdinand Marcos. American investment in the Islands is variously estimated at \$1 to \$3 billion.

As the domestic crisis began to get out of hand, Marcos declared martial law in September, 1972 with widespread arrests of opposition figures and intellectuals, tight control of the press [94], and new constitutional proposals considerably more favorable to American business interests than leftist and more radical nationalist sentiment in the [Constitutional] Convention would have wanted." [95] Marcos "seemed eager to stay on the right side of the U.S. capital... He also seemed intent on expanding opportunities for the domestic Philippine business of a few powerful families whose links with foreign interests, and preponderant power in so many aspects of Philippine political life have long been viewed, particularly in PKP and NPA [New People's Army] circles, as major obstacles to all significant reforms" [96] -- and rightly so.

Before the Constitutional Convention was aborted by the Marcos coup, charges had been made that USAID and the CIA were training Philippine police under the public safety program "for eventual para-military and counterinsurgency operations as part

of a global programme designed to militarize and 'mercenarize' the police forces of client states." [97] Between 1948 and 1968 more than \$1.7 billion had been provided in U.S. economic and military grants and loans under the U.S. military assistance program, including more than \$400 million in hardware. [98] Under the rubric of "technical assistance," U.S. AID finances the Office of Public Safety (OPS), which has been extensively involved "in reorganizing, funding and training the Philippine police apparatus both in the Philippines and the U.S. from 1965 to September 21, 1972, the day martial law was declared." [99] In December, 1966, Frank Walton, fresh from service in Saigon, where "he oversaw the growth and large-scale reorganization of the South Vietnamese police force -- all part of the overall CIA plan to dissolve the political infrastructure of the NLF" [100] -- was installed as "Team Chief" for AIDIOPS. He was assisted by a variety of U.S. officials with experience in Brazil, the Philippines, Ethiopia, and elsewhere, as well as by Philippine intelligence officers who had been trained by the CIA during the U.S.-backed suppression of the Huk insurgency, "and had become resident experts on counter-intelligence operations in and around Saigon." [101] Walton's group submitted a report to USAID in February, 1967 which "served as the impetus for a drastic reorganization of the Philippine police apparatus and for a much enlarged and more involved US Public Safety Division." [102] For fiscal year 1972-3, the expanded Public Safety program was budgeted by the U.S. government at \$3.9 million, a marked increase. Police are trained in the United States at CIA, FBI, army and local police training centers, and in the Philippines at training academies which "were easily converted into detention camps to hold the large numbers of political prisoners" after martial law was declared. [103]

With increased U.S. involvement in internal security problems, the new program is patterned on the CORDS (Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support) program -- the pacification program -- in Vietnam. The new Philippines project is staffed by former CORDS officials from Vietnam headed by Thomas Rose, who was AID public administration chief in Saigon, and Richard Knebel, former CORDS provincial adviser in Binh Dinh province. American military units have been "involved in 'civic action' operations in conjunction with the Filipino army that clearly had a relevance to internal security problems." [104] On July 12, 1973, William Sullivan was confirmed by the Senate for the post of Ambassador to the Philippines. Sullivan had been U.S. Ambassador in Laos from 1964 to 1969, where, as Anthony Lewis remarks, he 'played a decisive part in what must qualify as the most appalling episode of lawless cruelty in American history, the bombing of Laos.' [105] Sullivan has had a major role in organizing and coordinating U.S. subversive and military activities in Southeast Asia, and although his contributions to the people of Laos pale before those of his murderous successor, G. McMurtrie Godley, who implemented the Nixon-Kissinger program, they nevertheless achieved considerable scale. [106] It is altogether appropriate that Sullivan should now be shifted to the Philippines, just as Lansdale moved from the Philippines to Vietnam twenty years earlier, as part of the continuing effort to assist the people of Southeast Asia to remain in the Free World.

There are, and always will be, the naive, or credulous, or simply deceitful, who see American actions in Vietnam as an aberration, a deviation from the disinterested concern and noble goals that animate American policy in Southeast Asia and elsewhere. For many years the Philippines have stood as a neglected monument contradicting the "error" view, from the brutal exercise in pacification at the turn of the century to the early post-World War II "Philippinization" and repression. As the

groundwork is being laid in neo-colonial economic and social conditions, aided by U.S.-financed and -sponsored pacification techniques and policies, no one should be surprised if a renewed constructive bloodbath begins to unfold in that country. And as has been pointed out by Geoffrey Arlin [107]:

All talk of American withdrawal from Asia notwithstanding, the evidence is that America will pursue its old policy of interference and domination in Asia through other means. At one end of the spectrum is the case of Laos, where Thai mercenaries are being organised and paid by the U.S. to carry on the fight for the 'Free World'. At the other end, the Philippines continues to provide a classic example of the American stranglehold working to perfection.

CONSTRUCTIVE BLOODBATHS IN VIETNAM

French and Diemist Bloodbaths

Although the only pre-1965 bloodbath recognized in the official doctrine is that which occurred in North Vietnam during its land reform of the mid-50s, there were others.

In 1946, without warning, the French bombarded Haiphong, killing an estimated 6000 civilians [108], probably greater than the number of victims of the well publicized North Vietnamese land reform episode (discussed below). But as part of the French recolonization effort, and with Vietnam of little interest to the American leadership, this bloodbath was ignored and has not been mentioned yet by President Nixon or Douglas Pike in their historical reconstructions.

Diem's bloodbaths also were impressive, but as they were in the service of anti-Communism and the preservation of our client, Diem, they fall into the constructive or benign categories. Under our tutelage, Diem began his own "search and destroy" operations in the mid-and late 1950s, and his prison camps and torture chambers were filled and active. In 1956 the official figure for political prisoners in South Vietnam was fifteen to twenty thousand. Even the Diem friend and adviser, P. J. Honey, concluded on the basis of talks with former inmates, that the majority of these were "neither Communists nor pro-Communists." [109] The maltreatment and massacre of political prisoners was a regular practice during the Diem period, although these problems have become much more acute in recent years. [110] The 1958 massacre of prisoners in Diem's concentration camp Phu Loi led to such an outcry that P. J. Honey was dispatched to inquire into these events; and according to Lacouture, Honey could not verify more than twenty deaths at Phu Loi. [111]

"Pacification" as it developed from the earliest Diem period consisted in "killing, or arresting without either evidence or trials, large numbers of persons suspected of being Vietminh or 'rebels.' [112] This resulted in many small bloodbaths at the local level, plus larger ones associated with military expeditions carried out by Diem against the rural population. One former Vietminh resistance fighter gave the following account [113] of the Diemist terror and bloodbath in his village:

My village chief was a stranger to the village. He was very cruel. He hunted all the former members of the Communist Party during the Resistance to arrest and kill them. All told, he slaughtered fourteen Party members in my village. I saw him with my own eyes order the killing of two Party members in Mau Lam hamlet. They had their hands tied behind their backs and they were buried alive by the militia. I was scared to death.

Another former resistance fighter in Central Vietnam claimed that [114]: In 1956, the local government of Quang Nam started a terrorist action against old Resistance members. About 10,000 persons of the Resistance Army were arrested, and a good many of them were slaughtered. I had to run for my life, and I stayed in the mountains until 1960. I lived with three others who came from my village. We got help from the tribal population there.

The general mechanics of the larger bloodbaths were described [115] by Joseph Buttinger, another former Diem supporter and advisor.

In June 1956 Diem organized two massive expeditions to the regions that were controlled by the Communists without the slightest use of force. His soldiers arrested

tens of thousands of people... Hundreds, perhaps thousands of peasants were killed. Whole villages whose populations were not friendly to the government were destroyed by artillery. These facts were kept secret from the American people.

According to Jeffrey Race, a former U.S. Army adviser in South Vietnam who had access to extensive documentation on recent Vietnamese history [116],

the government terrorized far more than did the revolutionary movement - for example, by liquidations of former Vietminh, by artillery and ground attacks on "communist villages," and by roundups of "communist sympathizers." Yet it was just these tactics that led to the constantly increasing strength of the revolutionary movement in Long An from 1960 to 1965.

During the period 1955-60 the Vietminh mission was political, and "though it used assassinations and kidnapping," according to the Pentagon Papers historians it "circumspectly avoided military operations." [117] A USMAAG report of July 1957 stated: "The Viet Cong guerillas and propagandists ... are still waging a grim battle for survival. In addition to an accelerated propaganda campaign, the Communists have been forming 'front' organizations ... seeking to spread the theory of 'Peace and Co-existence!'" [118] On the other hand, Diem, at least through 1957, was having "marked success with fairly sophisticated pacification programs in the countryside." [119] In a precise analogy with his sponsor's pacification efforts of 1965-72, "By the end of 1956, the civic action component of the GVN pacification program had been cut back severely." [120] The Pentagon historians refer to "Diem's nearly paranoid preoccupation with security," which led to policies that "thoroughly terrified the Vietnamese peasants and detracted significantly from the regime's popularity." [121]

According to the Pentagon historians, "No direct links have been established between Hanoi and perpetrators of rural violence." [122] The phrase "perpetrators of rural violence" is applied by the Pentagon historians only to the Vietminh, who admittedly were concentrating on political activities, and not to the Diem regime, which as they note was conducting a policy of large-scale reprisals and violence, so extensive and undiscriminating as to be counterproductive. It is not difficult to establish "direct links" between Washington and perpetrators of the Diemist repression, incidentally. Once again it is clear that "constructive" bloodbaths can never involve "violence" for establishment propagandists and scholars; the word is reserved for those seeking social change in an illegitimate direction and under improper auspices.

Diem's extensive use of violence and reprisals against former Resistance fighters was in direct violation of the Geneva Accords (Article 14c), as was his refusal to abide by the election proviso. Diem had publicly repudiated the Accords in January, 1955, and the United States gave him complete support until he became a liability in 1963. The analogy with the later scenario and the Agreement of January, 1973 and its surrounding events is, once again, depressingly apt. Thieu has plainly expressed a similar disdain for the Accords. The constitutional structure of his regime -- which remains "intact and unchanged" with full U.S. support, Washington announces -- outlaws the second of the two parallel and equivalent parties that are to achieve peaceful reconciliation in South Vietnam. And Thieu's open retaliatory activities and intentions are completely incompatible with those parts of the 1973 Agreement that prohibit all acts of reprisal (Article 11), and require settlement through negotiations (Articles 10,12 and 13). But then, the entire U.S. strategy and policy of militarization

of and support for its minority faction is incompatible with the commitment to nonintervention (Article 4), selfdetermination for the South Vietnamese (Introduction and Article 9), settlement of all disagreements "through negotiations, and avoid[ance of] all armed conflict" (Article 10). In brief, even more clearly than in 1954 the United States and its agent have entered into an agreement, which is incompatible with their clearly stated aims and policies -- indeed, with the very nature of the Saigon regime. [123]

The Overall U.S. Assault as the Primary Bloodbath

In a very real sense the overall U.S. effort in South Vietnam may be regarded as a deliberately imposed bloodbath. Military escalation was undertaken to offset the well understood lack of any significant social and political base for the elite military faction supported by the United States. Despite occasional expressions of interest in the welfare and free choice of the South Vietnamese, the documents made available as part of the Pentagon Papers show that U.S. planners consistently regarded the impact of their decisions on the Vietnamese at most as a peripheral issue, more commonly as totally inconsequential. Nonintervention and an NLF takeover were unacceptable for reasons that had nothing to do with Vietnamese interests, they were based on an assumed adverse effect on our material and strategic interests. It was assumed that an American failure would be harmful to our prestige and would reduce the confidence of our satellite governments that we would protect them from the winds of change. [124] The Thai elite, for example, might "conclude that we simply could not be counted on" to help them in suppressing local insurgencies. What is more, there was the constant threat of a "demonstration effect" of real social and economic progress in China [125], North Korea [126], and North Vietnam [127].

In spite of official reiterations of the alleged threat of Chinese and North Vietnamese "expansionism," it was recognized by U.S. policy makers that a unified Communist Vietnam probably would have limited ambitions itself, and would provide a barrier to any Chinese moves further South. [128] It is not the threat of military expansion that official documents cite as the justification for the huge assault on Vietnam. Rather, it was feared that by processes never spelled out in detail, "the rot [might] spread to Thailand" [129] and perhaps beyond. The "rot" can only be the Communist "ideological threat" that is, the possibility of social and economic progress outside the framework of American control and imperial interests, which must be fought by American intervention against local Communist uprisings, whether or not any armed attack is involved. This is the rot that might spread to Thailand and beyond, inspiring Communist-led nationalist movements. But no skillful ideologist would want such implications spelled out too clearly, to himself or to others. Consequently, the central factors involved remain vague, their place taken by propagandistic fabrications about aggression, threatened bloodbaths, and our interest in self-determination.

It is important to bear in mind that these concepts -- in fact, even the terminology in which they were expressed -- were not invented by Vietnam planners. Rather, they merely adopted a standard mechanism of proven effectiveness in mobilizing support for American intervention. When Dean Acheson faced the problem of convincing the "leaders of Congress" (his quotes) to support the Truman Doctrine in February, 1947, he outlined the threat as follows: [130]

In the past eighteen months, I said, Soviet pressure on the Straits, on Iran, and on northern Greece had brought the Balkans to the point where a highly possible Soviet breakthrough might open three continents to Soviet penetration. Like apples in a barrel infected by one rotten one, the corruption of Greece would infect Iran and all to the east. It would also carry infection to Africa through Asia Minor and Egypt, and to Europe through Italy and France, already threatened by the strongest domestic Communist parties in Western Europe.

As Acheson well knew, Soviet pressure on the Straits and Iran had been withdrawn already and American control was firmly established. Further, there was no evidence of Soviet pressure on Northern Greece - on the contrary, Stalin was unsympathetic to the Greek guerrillas. Still the rot might spread unless the U.S. undertook to rescue the terroristic regime in Athens, and a "Soviet breakthrough" was a useful propaganda device with which to mobilize domestic support. Acheson was concerned with the more remote dominoes - the Middle East and the industrial societies that were subject to the "threat" of internal democratic politics that might bring Communist parties to power, thwarting American intentions. Similarly in the case of Indochina, it was the potential exit from the Free World of Indonesia with its rich resources, and industrial Japan, that obsessed American planners as they contemplated the threat of falling dominoes and rotting apples.

As the Pentagon Papers show, the U.S. leadership knew that in Vietnam the "primary sources of Communist strength in the South remain indigenous," with a corresponding "ability to recruit locally" and it was recognized that the NLF "enjoys some status as a nationalist movement," whereas the military government "is composed primarily of technicians" lacking in "positive support from various key segments of the populace" and determined "to remain the real power in South Vietnam" without any "interference from the civilians in the conduct of the war." [131] The experienced pacification Chief John Paul Vann, writing in 1965, put the matter more brutally [132]:

A popular political base for the Government of South Vietnam does not now The existing government is oriented toward the exploitation of the rural and lower class urban populations. It is, in fact, a continuation of the French colonial system of government with upper class Vietnamese replacing the French. The dissatisfaction of the agrarian population... is expressed largely through alliance with the NLF. It was thus well known to American authorities in 1965 that we were fighting a nationalist mass movement in favor of a corrupt oligarchy that lacked popular backing. The Vietnam war was fought to return this nationalist mass movement to that measure of passivity and defeatism" identified by Pool as necessary for "stability" in the Third World (see note 12). It must be brought under comprador military control such as we have imposed or supported in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Bolivia, Greece, Thailand, etc. The power to rationalize self-interest is great, however, and some American leaders may have been able to keep their minds from being cluttered with inconvenient facts. In so doing, they preserved the belief that because we were the good guys our purposes must be benign and democratic and must have some positive relationship to the interests of the South Vietnamese people. Even the evidence that we were directing a large part of our military effort to assaulting and uprooting the rural population of the South, already overwhelming before the end of 1965, was easily assimilated into the Orwellian doctrine of "defense against aggression."

The decision to employ technologically advanced conventional weaponry against the southern countryside made a certain amount of sense on two assumptions: first, that the revolutionary forces were predominant in the rural areas, so that the war had to be a true anti-population war to force submission; and secondly, that the "demonstration effect" is important to U.S. interests, and that our job was to terrorize, kill and destroy in order to prove that revolution "doesn't pay." The first assumption was true in fact and must be assumed to have contributed to the gradual emergence of a full-fledged and semi-genocidal policy of search and destroy and unrestrained firepower. The second assumption was evidently important in the thinking of high level U.S. planners and advisers and also contributed to the evolution of policy. [133]

The character of U.S. policy was also influenced by the gradual recognition of two additional facts: first, that the South Vietnamese victims of "pacification" were essentially voiceless, unable to reach U.S. or world opinion even as effectively as the North Vietnamese, [134] with the result that the population being "saved" could be and has been treated with virtually unrestrained violence (see the descriptions in the sections which follow) The second fact was that relevant U.S. sensitivities (i.e those of politically significant numbers of people) were almost exclusively related to U.S. casualties. Both of these considerations encouraged the development of an indiscriminate war of firepower, a war of shooting first and making inquiries later; this would minimize U.S. casualties and have the spin-off benefit of more thoroughly terrorizing the population. The enhanced civilian casualties need not be reported -- the enormous statistical service of the Pentagon always has had difficulty dredging up anything credible on this one question -- or such casualties could be reported as "enemy" or "Vietcong." Years of familiarity with this practice has not caused the news services to refrain from transmitting, as straight news, Saigon and Pentagon handouts on "enemy" casualties.

Other factors were involved in making the entire U.S. enterprise in Vietnam a huge bloodbath; faith in technological solutions, racism reinforced by the corruption of "our" Vietnamese and the helplessness of the victimized population, and the frustrations of the war. But essentially the initial high level decisions to bomb freely, to conduct search-and-destroy operations, and to fight a war against the rural population with virtually unlimited force were the source of the bloodbath.

The immensity of the overall American-imposed bloodbath can be inferred to some degree from the sheer volume of ordnance employed, the nature of the weaponry, and the principles which have governed their use. Through the end of 1971 over 3.9 million tons of bombs were dropped on South Vietnam from the air alone - about double the total bomb tonnage used by the United States in all theaters during World War II - with ground ordnance also employed in historically unique volume. [135] A large fraction of the napalm used in Indochina has been dropped in South Vietnam, an illustration of the abuse visited on the voiceless South Vietnamese (in protecting them from aggression"!) by the American command in collaboration with its client government in Saigon Over 90% of the air strikes in South Vietnam were classified officially as "interdiction" [136], which means bombing not carried out in support of specific on-going military actions, but rather area bombing, frequently on a programmed basis, and attacks on "what are suspected" to be "enemy base camps, or sites from which a shot may have been fired.

One former military intelligence officer with the American Division in South Vietnam told a Congressional Subcommittee: "Every information report (IR) we wrote based on our sources' information was classified as (1) unverifiable and (2) usually reliable source ... The unverified and in fact unverifiable information, nevertheless, was used regularly as input to artillery strikes, harassment and interdiction fire (H & I), B-52 and other air strikes, often on populated areas." [137] In the words of Army Chief of Staff General Johnson, "We have not enough information. We act with ruthlessness, like a steamroller, bombing extensive areas and not selected targets based on detailed intelligence." [138] This is an expression of indiscriminateness as a principle, and it is a perfect complement to the other facets of a policy which was from the beginning semi-genocidal in purpose and method, resting in large part on the fact that the civilian population has been regarded as enemy or, at best, of no account.

The number of civilian casualties inflicted on South Vietnam is unknown, but surely is underestimated by the Senate Subcommittee on Refugees at 400,000 dead, 900,000 wounded and 6.4 million turned into refugees. [139] Conservative as these figures are, however, they mean "that there is hardly a family in South Vietnam that has not suffered a death, injury or the anguish of abandoning an ancient homestead." [140]

That the overall American assault on South Vietnam has involved a huge bloodbath can also be inferred from the nature of "pacification," both in general concept and in the details of implementation. We shall not here go into the general concept and the ways in which it was applied and was rapidly transformed into the wholesale killing and forced transfer of civilians. [141] We shall confine ourselves to an examination of three cases: a specific operation by U.S. forces over a brief time period; a series of atrocities perpetrated over a six or seven-year period by our South Korean mercenary allies, with the certain knowledge and tacit acceptance of U.S. authorities; and the Phoenix program of extra-legal counter terror against enemy civilians. These are by no means the only blood baths that typify the constructive mode, but they are offered as illustrative and deserving of greater attention.

"Operation Speedy Express"

Operation Speedy Express was only one of a great many major pacification efforts carried out by the U.S. command. It is unusual, apparently, only in that it was studied and reported by a competent and experienced correspondent, Kevin P. Buckley of *Newsweek*. He examined the military and hospital records of the Operation and interviewed South Vietnamese inhabitants and pacification officials of the Mekong Delta province of Kien Hoa, the site of Speedy Express. In the latter part of 1968 the American command launched an "accelerated pacification program" to wrest territory from the NLF and place it back under the "control" of Saigon. "Operation Speedy Express" was the code name for a six-month campaign by the U.S. Ninth Infantry Division under that program. The campaign was carried out in a heavily populated Delta province that had traditionally supported the NLF. Buckley reported [142]:

All the evidence I gathered pointed to a clear conclusion: a staggering number of noncombatant civilians - perhaps as many as 5,000 according to one official - were killed by U.S. fire power to "pacify" Kien Hoa. The death toll there made the My Lai massacre look trifling by comparison... The Ninth Division put all it had into the operation. Eight thousand infantrymen scoured the heavily populated countryside, but

contact with the elusive enemy was rare. Thus, in its pursuit of pacification, the division relied heavily on its 50 artillery pieces, 50 helicopters (many armed with rockets and mini-guns) and the deadly support lent by the Air Force. There were 3,381 tactical air strikes by tighter bombers during "Speedy Express"..."Death is our business and business is good," was the slogan painted on one helicopter unit's quarters during the operation. And so it was. Cumulative statistics for "Speedy Express" show that 10,899 "enemy" were killed. In the month of March alone, "over 3,000 enemy troops were killed... which is the largest monthly total for any American division in the Vietnam war," said the division's official magazine. When asked to account for the enormous body counts, a division senior officer explained that helicopter crews often caught unarmed "enemy" in open fields. But Vietnamese repeatedly told me that those "enemy" were farmers gunned down while they worked in their rice fields... There is overwhelming evidence that virtually all the Viet Cong were well armed. Simple civilians were, of course, not armed. And the enormous discrepancy between the body count [i.e 11,000] and the number of captured weapons [i.e 748] is hard to explain - except by the conclusion that many victims were unarmed innocent civilians... The people who still live in pacified Kien Hoa all have vivid recollections of the devastation that American firepower brought to their lives in early 1969. Virtually every person to whom I spoke had suffered in some way. "There were 5,000 people in our village before 1969, but there were none in 1970," one village elder told me. "The Americans destroyed every house with artillery, air strikes, or by burning them down with cigarette lighters. About 100 people were killed by bombing, others were wounded and others became refugees. Many were children killed by concussion from the bombs which their small bodies could not withstand, even if they were hiding underground." Other officials, including the village police chief, corroborated the man's testimony. I could not, of course, reach every village. But in each of the many places where I went, the testimony was the same: 100 killed here, 200 killed there. One old man summed up all the stories: "The Americans killed some VC but only a small number. But of civilians, there were a large number killed" Although Buckley states that pacification chief John Paul Vann found that Speedy Express had alienated the population (a profound discovery), he reports that the Army command considered its work well done. After all, "the 'land rush' succeeded. Government troops moved into the ravaged countryside in the wake of the bombardments, set up outposts and established Saigon's dominance of Kien Hoa." The commander of the unit responsible for this achievement was promoted with an accolade from General Abrams, who felt that "the performance of this division has been magnificent." On another occasion, when awarding him the Legion of Merit, Abrams referred to George Patton III, the man most noted for converting "pacification" into plain killing, as "one of my finest young commanders." [143]

The 43-plus My Lais of the South Korean Mercenaries

South Korean mercenary forces were contracted for and brought into South Vietnam by the Johnson Administration in 1965, and they remained there into 1973. News reports in 1965 and 1966 described these South Korean forces as "fierce" and "effective," but only in January 1970 was it disclosed publicly that their effectiveness rested on a policy of simple and deliberate murder of South Vietnamese civilians. At that time it was reported that they had carried out a policy of simply shooting one of ten civilians in villages which they occupied. [144]

Not until 1972, however, did the scale of South Korean civilian murders become public knowledge (although still of little interest to the mass media these murders fall

into the "constructive" category). [145] Two Vietnamese-speaking Quakers, Diane and Michael Jones, carried out an intensive study of a portion of the area that had been occupied by the South Koreans for half a decade. To summarize their findings [146]:

(a) The South Korean "rented soldiers," as the South Vietnamese describe them, committed a whole series of My Lai-scale massacres, twelve separate massacres of 100 or more civilians having been uncovered in the Jones' study. These soldiers carried out dozens of other massacres of twenty or more unarmed civilians, plus innumerable isolated killings, robberies, rapes, tortures, and devastation of land and personal property. The aggregate number of known murders by the South Koreans clearly runs into many thousands; and the Joneses examined only a part of the territory "pacified" by these "allied" forces. (b) The bulk of the victims of these slaughters were women, children, and old people, as draft-age males had either joined the NLF, been recruited into the Saigon army, or were in hiding. (c) These mass murders were carried out in part, but only in part [147], as reprisals for attacks on the South Korean forces, or as a warning against such attacks. Briefly, the civilians of the entire area covered by the South Koreans served as hostages; if any casualties were taken by these mercenaries, as by an exploding mine, they often would go to the nearest village and shoot twenty, or 120, unarmed civilians. This policy is similar to that employed by the Nazis, but South Korean hostage murders of civilians have been relatively more extensive and undiscriminating than those perpetrated by the Nazis in Western Europe during World War II, considering the relative scale of the occupation. (d) These mass murders were carried out over an extended time period, and into 1972, with certain knowledge by U.S. authorities. [148] There is no evidence that U.S. officials made any effort to discourage this form of "pacification" or that any disciplinary action was ever taken in response to these frequent and sustained atrocities. In fact, there is reason to believe the South Korean policy of deliberate murder of civilians was not merely known and tolerated but was looked upon with favor by some U.S. authorities. Frank Baldwin, of Columbia University's East Asia Institute, reports that the Korean policy was "an open secret in Korea for several years." American officials admitted to Baldwin that these accounts were true, "sometimes with regret, but usually with admiration." [149] (e) In its request for \$134 million for fiscal 1973 to support the continued presence of South Korean troops in Vietnam (raising the 1966-73 total to \$1.76 billion), the DOD pointed out to Congress that the South Korean troops "protect" an important section of South Vietnam. It is a fact that the South Koreans have "protected" and given "security" [150] to people in South Vietnam in precisely the Orwellian- official American sense that Nixon, Westmoreland, and the pacification program in general have done. The acceptability of this form of pacification and the now well established and consistent propensity of American forces and each of their "allies" -- not merely South Koreans [151] -- to carry out systematic acts of violence against South Vietnamese civilians, suggest that such atrocities and bloodbaths must be "built in" to the American effort and mission, they must be an integral part of "pacifying" a poor, virtually defenseless, but stubbornly uncooperative, foreign population.

Phoenix: A Case Study of Indiscriminate "Selective" Terror
With unlimited resources available for killing, one option fitfully pursued by the American invaders of Vietnam -- supplementing bombing, search and destroy, and the organization of forces of mercenaries -- has been selective counter-terror. If the NLF

had a political infrastructure that was important to its success, and if their own terror against the Saigon political machine effectively had made a shambles of the latter, why not duplicate and better their program of selective force? By doing so we would, as in providing them with the South Koreans and Ninth Division, help "to protect the Vietnamese people against terrorism" (to quote William Colby) [152], and thus bring "security" to the peasantry, threatened by the terror employed by their sister1 brothers and other relatives among the NLF cadres. Phoenix was a late-comer on the stage of selective counter-terror; it illustrates as well as any program, the inability of the American leadership to grasp the reasons for the NLF successes and the failures of Saigon. It points up the ease with which American programs are absorbed into (and add further corrupting impetus to) a system of rackets and indiscriminate torture and killings, and the willingness of the U.S. political/military bureaucracy actively to support and rationalize the most outlandish and brutal systems of terror. The defense of this degenerate program by Komer, Colby, Sullivan and other American officials is also unusual in the quality of the rationalizations offered for U.S.-planned and financed bloodbaths.

The immediate predecessor [153] of the Phoenix program was the Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation (ICEX) programs initiated in mid-1967 [154] under the direction of Westmoreland and Komer, and involving CIA, American civilian and military personnel, and the Saigon military-intelligence-police apparatus. Early internal directives describe the Phoenix program as a U.S. effort of advice, support, and assistance to the Saigon Phung Hoang program. Later modifications delete reference to "Phoenix" and refer merely to the Saigon Phung Hoang program, in line with the approach of "keep[ing] the GVN foremost in the picture presented to its own people and the world at large." [155] On March 4, 1968 the U.S. Secretary of Defense recommended that "Operation Phoenix which is targetted [sic] against the Viet Cong must be pursued more vigorously in closer liaison with the U.S." while "Vietnamese armed forces should be devoted to anti-infrastructure activities on a priority basis." [156]

After Westmoreland's and Komer's ICEX became Phoenix the coordinated U.S.-Saigon intelligence-military-police program succeeded in "neutralizing" [157] some 84,000 "Viet Cong infrastructure," with 21,000 killed, according to one set of reported official figures [158]. The Saigon government claims that, under Phoenix, 40,994 suspected enemy civilians were killed, from its inception in August 1968 through the middle of 1971. [159] Just who these victims have been is not entirely clear to William E. Colby, former head of Civil Operations and Rural Development [sic] Support Program (CORDS), and now up for confirmation to head the CIA. Colby told a Congressional Committee that he has "never been highly satisfied with the accuracies of our intelligence efforts on the Vietcong Infrastructure," conceding that "larger numbers" than the thousand suggested to him by Congressman Reid "might have been improperly identified" as Vietcong Infrastructure in the course of Phoenix operations. [160] However, he assured the Committee that things are steadily "improving" (Colby's favorite word), and while we have not yet reached perfect due process or comprehensive knowledge of VC Infrastructure, Phoenix has actually improved the quality of U.S.-Saigon counter terror by its deep concern with accurate intelligence and its dedication to "stern justice." [161] Most of the Vietnamese killed, Colby assured the Committee, were killed "as members of military units or while fighting off arrest." [162] Conveniently these dead enemy have usually had

incriminating documents on their person that permits identification. ("What they are identified from is from documents on the body after a fire fight.") [163] Thus although things are not perfect South Vietnam is not the "pretty wild place" it was at one period "when the government was very unstable." Though there are "unjustifiable abuses," "in collaboration with the Vietnamese authorities we have moved to stop that sort of nonsense." [164]

Colby's suggestions that intelligence of VC Infrastructure has improved, that such intelligence has been relevant to Phoenix operations, and that deaths have occurred mainly in combat are contradicted by all nonofficial testimony on the subject. The program initially was motivated by the belief that U.S. forces were developing much valuable information that was not being put to use. [165] Actually, much of this intelligence was unverified and unverifiable even in the best of circumstances. And Komer and his colleagues were aware of the fact that the "primary interest" of Saigon officials "is money," [166] with the potential, therefore, that a counter-terror program using Saigon machinery would be corrupt, indiscriminate, and ineffective, except for the "spinoff" from mass terror. Potential corruption would be further heightened under a body quota system, which was quickly installed and subsequently enlarged with specific prize money of \$11,000 offered for a live VCI and half that for a dead one. Corruption would be maximized by using dubious personnel to carry out the assassinations. And, in fact, the actual assassinations were carried out regularly by former criminals or former Communists recruited and paid by the CIA, by CIA-directed teams drawn from ethnic minorities, American military men, and Nationalist Chinese and Thai mercenaries. An American IVS volunteer reports picking up two hitchhikers in the Mekong Delta, former criminals, who told him that by bringing in a few bodies now and then and collecting the bounty, they can live handsomely. [167]

The quota system is applied at many levels. Michael J. Uhi, a former military intelligence (MI) officer, testified that a Phoenix MI team "measured its success ... not only by its 'body count' and 'kill ratio' but by the number of CD's (civil detainees) it had captured... All CD's, because of this command pressure ... were listed as VCI. To my knowledge, not one of these people ever freely admitted being a cadre member. And again, contrary to Colby's statement, most of our CD's were women and children..." [168] Quotas were also fixed for local officials in an effort to produce "results" on a wider front; and as one American adviser noted, "They will meet every quota that's established for them." [169]

Torture, a long-standing policy of the Saigon regime is greatly encouraged by quotas and rewards for "Vietcong Infrastructure." A sardonic saying favored by the Saigon police is: "If they are innocent beat them until they become guilty." [170] According to Uhl, "Not only was there no due process. ..but fully all detainees were brutalized and many were literally tortured." [171] A woman interviewed by Tom Fox after her release from a Saigon interrogation center in July 1972 claimed that more than 90% of those arrested and taken to the center were subjected to torture. [172] K. Baron Osborn, who served in a covert program of intelligence in Vietnam, not only testified to a wide variety of forms of torture used by U.S. and Saigon personnel, but also made the startling claim that "I never knew an individual to be detained as a VC suspect who ever lived through an interrogation in a year and a half, and that included quite a number of individuals." [173]

In some respects the Phoenix system has been biased in favor of the PRC and its cadres and against the ordinary citizen. The former are more elusive and better able to defend themselves and sometimes have established a modus vivendi with local officials. But Phoenix can be "widely used to arrest and detail non-Communist dissidents," according to Theodore Jacqueney, a former AID and CORDS employee in Vietnam. [174] The Phoenix program also serves for personal vendettas, or for obtaining cash rewards for producing bodies. Meeting quotas is always possible in Free Vietnam by simply committing violence against the defenseless.

A system of terror-run-amok is facilitated by the incompetence and chronic irrelevance of the "intelligence" system that Colby claimed to be "improving" and which gave him hopes of "stern justice." According to Michael Uhi, Colby's claim of increasingly adequate intelligence as a basis for the huge number of Phoenix victims simply reflects Colby's "general lack of understanding of what is actually going on in the field." [175] According to Uhi, the MI groups in South Vietnam never had the capacity to do such a major intelligence job. "A mammoth task such as this would greatly tax even our resourceful FBI, where we have none of the vast cross-cultural problems to contend with." As noted earlier, in the reality of practice [176],

We had no way of determining the background of these sources, nor their motivation for providing American units with information. No American in the team spoke or understood Vietnamese well enough to independently debrief any "contact." ... Our paid sources could easily have been either provocateurs or opportunists with a score to settle. Every information report (IR) we wrote based on our sources' information was classified as (1) unverifiable and (2) usually reliable source. As to the first, it speaks for itself; the second, in most cases was pure rationale for the existence of the program. The unverified and in fact unverifiable information, nevertheless, was used regularly as input to artillery strikes, harassment and interdiction fire (H& I), B52 and other air strikes, often on populated areas.

K. Barton Osborn testified, also, that the Phoenix bureaucracy unofficially encourage killing on the spot rather than going through the required administrative procedures: [177]

After all, it was a big problem that had to be dealt with expediently. This was the mentality. This carries a semi-official or semi-illegal program to the logical conclusion that I described here. It became a sterile depersonalized murder program... There was no cross-check; there was no investigation; there were no second opinions. And certainly not whatever official modus operandi had been described as a triple reporting system for verification. There was no verification and there was no discrimination. It was completely indiscriminate and at best the individuals were either able to escape capture and neutralize them or interrogated and let go.

The indiscriminateness of the Phoenix murders was so blatant that in 1970 one senior AID adviser of 'the Danang City Advisory Group told former AID employee Theodore Jacqueney that he refused ever to set foot in the Province Interrogation Center again, because "war crimes are going on there." [178] A UPI report of November 1971 cites another U.S. adviser, who claims that local officials in the Delta decided simply to kill outright 80% of their "suspects," but American advisers were able to convince them that the proportion should be reduced to 50%. [179] This is the

"selective" counter-terror by which the United States and its client have been bringing "security" to the benighted.

NEFARIOUS AND MYTHICAL BLOODBATHS

Revolutionary Terror in Theory and Practice

The Vietnamese revolutionaries have shed considerable blood over the years in individual acts of terror, some deliberate and calculated, others reflecting sporadic breakdowns in the discipline of cadres under enormous pressure, along with occasional sheer vengeance killing. There are very few authenticated cases, however, in which the insurgents have killed significant numbers of unarmed civilians in deliberate acts of mass murder. [180] This appears to be a result of a long standing revolutionary philosophy and strategy, their relationship to the underlying population, and superior discipline.

Despite the widely held belief to the contrary, a product of decades of officially inspired propaganda, the Vietnamese revolutionary movement has always given force and violence a lower rating in the spectrum of means than have the Diem government and its successors or their American sponsors. This is in close accord with classical Maoist principles of revolutionary organization, strategy and behavior. The NLF view in early 1960 was: [181]

Armed activities only fulfill a supporting role for the political struggle movement. It is impossible to substitute armed forces and armed struggle for political forces and political struggle. Formerly we erred in slighting the role of armed activity. Today we must push armed activity to the right degree, but at the same time we must not abuse or rely excessively on armed activity. Douglas Pike, the official American government propagandist on the NLF, confirms the great weight given by it to the political struggle as opposed to "violence." [182] It maintained that its contest with the GVN and the United States should be fought out at the political level and that the use of massed military might was itself illegitimate. Thus one of the NLF's unspoken, and largely unsuccessful, purposes was to use the struggle movement before the onlooking world to force the GVN and the United States to play the game according to its rules: The battle was to be organizational or quasi-political, the battleground was to be the minds and loyalties of the rural Vietnamese, the weapons were to be ideas; .. and all force was automatically condemned as terror or repression. The United States and the Diem regime would not play by any rules of the game that excluded the use of force; and as Pike states, in the end "armed combat was a GVN-imposed requirement; the NLF was obliged to use counter-force to survive." [183]

According to Jeffrey Race, before 1960 the South Vietnamese revolutionaries carried out an official policy of "non-violence" which led to a serious decimation of their ranks, with violence monopolized almost entirely by the American sponsored Diem regime. Race contends: [184]

By adopting an almost entirely defensive role during this period and by allowing the government to be the first to employ violence, the Party -- at great cost -- allowed the government to pursue the conflict in increasingly violent terms, through its relentless reprisal against any opposition, its use of torture, and, particularly after May 1959, through the psychological impact in the rural areas of the proclamation of Law 10/59. [185]

The idea that the success of the Vietnam revolutionaries was based on "terrorizing" the population is shown by Race to be a gross misperception; in fact, it was the American-sponsored and-advised Saigon government that in the end helped destroy

itself by its inability to respond to problems and threats except by gross terror. Race's discussion is worth quoting at length: [186]

The lessons of Long An are that violence can destroy, but cannot build; violence may explain the cooperation of a few individuals, but it cannot explain the cooperation of a whole social class, for this would involve us in the contradiction of "Who is to coerce the coercers?" Such logic leads inevitably to the absurd picture of the revolutionary leader in his jungle base, "coercing" millions of terrorized individuals throughout the country.... The history of events in Long An also indicate that violence will work against the user, unless he has already preempted a large part of the population and then limits his acts of violence to a sharply defined minority. In fact, this is exactly what happened in the case of the government: far from being bound by any commitments to legality or humane principles, the government terrorized far more than did the revolutionary movement..[and] it was just these tactics that led to the constantly increasing strength of the revolutionary movement in Long An from 1960 to 1965. Race indicated that official Communist executions "actually were the consequence of extensive investigation and approval by higher authority." Furthermore, many careless executions during the Resistance prior to 1954 had had adverse effects on the Party, so that after it became stronger it "exercised much tighter control over the procedures for approving executions..." [187] This concern for the secondary effects of unjust executions sharply contrasts with the policies of the Saigon regimes under U.S. sponsorship, and even more with the policies of the United States itself from 1965-73.

Revolutionary success in Vietnam both in theory and practice has been based primarily on understanding and trying to meet the needs of the masses. Jeffrey Race notes that government officials were aware of the fact that "communist cadres are close to the people, while ours are not," [188] yet they appeared to be unaware of the reasons, which are traceable to a recruitment pattern for government office that systematically "denied advancement to those from majority elements of the rural population." The reasons also are related to a total failure to meet the real needs of the rural masses, in contrast with the revolutionary forces who "offered concrete and practical solutions to the daily problems of substantial segments of the rural population..." [189] A movement geared to winning support from the rural masses is not likely to resort to bloodbaths among the rural population. A government recruiting wholly from an elite minority centered in the cities and admittedly "out of touch" with its own people, dependent on a foreign power for its existence and sustenance, generously supplied with weapons of mass destruction by its foreign sponsor -- this type of government both in theory and practice can be expected to try to "pacify" its own people, and is capable of bringing in an outside power to help to do so, while both talk of protecting the rural masses from "revolutionary terror."

Mythical Bloodbaths in Vietnam

Numerous cases of atrocities have been attributed to the NLF or DRV [190], and several have been nurtured by U.S. government propaganda as cornerstones of the justification of American intervention. We focus briefly on the two most important mythical bloodbaths: that associated with the North Vietnamese land reform of the mid-1950s and the Huemassacres of 1968.

Land Reform in the Mid-Fifties

In an address on November 3, 1969, President Nixon spoke of the DRV Communists having murdered more than 50,000 people following their takeover in the North in the 1950s. Six months later, in a speech given on April 30, 1970 he raised the ante to "hundreds of thousands" who had been exposed in 1954 to the "slaughter and savagery of the DRV leadership. Then, one week later, on May 8, 1970, apparently in some panic at the public's response to his invasion of Cambodia, Mr. Nixon invoked the image of "millions" of civilians who would be massacred if the North Vietnamese were ever to descend into South Vietnam. Subsequently, in the calm of a press interview on April 16, 1971, President Nixon reported that "a half a million, by conservative estimates ... were murdered or otherwise exterminated by the North Vietnamese."

It is obvious that a credibility problem exists with weekly variations in numbers of alleged victims, but there are three elements in this particular bloodbath myth worthy of discussion. First, whatever the numbers involved in the DRV land reform abuses, they had little or nothing to do with retaliatory action for collaboration with the French. Even in the sources relied on by official propagandists the victims were identified primarily as landlords being punished for alleged past offenses against their dependent tenants, rather than wartime collaborators. Thus the attempts to use this episode as a proof of a probable bloodbath of retaliation for collaboration with the Americans or noncooperation during the continuing fighting is strained.

Second, the North Vietnamese leadership was upset by the abuses in the land reform, publicly acknowledged its errors, punished many officials who had carried out or permitted injustices, and implemented administrative reforms to prevent recurrences. In brief, the DRV leadership showed a capacity to respond to abuses and keep in touch with rural interests and needs. [191] It is a "bitter truth" for Professor Samuel Huntington that the "relative political stability" of North Vietnam, in contrast with the South, rests on the fact that "the organization of the Communist party reaches out into the rural areas and provides a channel for communication of rural grievances to the center and for control of the countryside by the government." [192] What Huntington misses is that class interest does not prevent the DRV leadership from responding constructively to rural grievances. In the South, as Jeffrey Race points out, even when the reactionary elites have come into possession of captured documents that stress rural grievances which the insurgents feel they can capitalize on (and for which they offer programs) "the government did not develop appropriate policies to head off the exploitation of the issues enumerated in the document." [193]

Third, and perhaps most important for present purposes, the basic sources for the larger estimates of killings in the North Vietnamese land reform were persons affiliated with the CIA or the Saigon Propaganda Ministry. According to a Vietnamese Catholic now living in France, Colonel Nguyen Van Chau, who was head of the Central Psychological War Service for the Saigon Army from 1956 to 1962, the "bloodbath" figures for the land reform were "100% fabricated" by the intelligence services of Saigon. According to Colonel Chau, a systematic campaign of vilification by the use of forged documents was carried out during the mid-1950s to justify Diem's refusal to negotiate with Hanoi in preparation for the unheld unifying elections of 1956. According to Chau the forging of documents was assisted by U.S. and British intelligence agencies, who helped gather authentic documents that permitted a plausible foundation to be laid for the forgeries, which "were distributed to various

political groups and to groups of writers and artists, who used the false documents to carry out the propaganda campaign." [194]

The primary source of information on the land reform for many years has been the work of Hoang Van Chi, formerly a substantial landholder in North Vietnam, and employed and subsidized by the Saigon Ministry of Information, CIA, and other official U.S. sources for many years. [195] Recently, D. Gareth Porter has undertaken the first close analysis of his work and has demonstrated that Chi's conclusions were based on a series of falsehoods, nonexistent documents, and slanted and deceptive translations of real documents. For example, Chi states that the DRV authorities fixed a minimum quota of three landlords to be executed in each village, when in fact they placed an upper limit of three who could be denounced and tried, not executed. [196] In another passage Chi quotes Giap as saying, "Worse still, torture came to be regarded as normal practice during Party reorganization," when in fact Giap actually said: "Even coercion was used in carrying out party reorganization." Other passages cited by Chi as evidence of a plan for a "deliberate excess of terror" are shown by Porter to be "simply cases of slanted translation for a propaganda purpose.' [197]

The estimate of 700,000, or 5% of the population of North Vietnam, as victims of the land reform Chi now claims to be merely a "guess," based largely on experience in his own village where ten of 200 persons died, although only one was literally executed. [198] Given Chi's proven willingness to lie, his figure often deaths attributable to the land reform can hardly be taken at face value, [199] but his extrapolation of this sample to the entirety of North Vietnam, which even Chi explicitly recognizes as nonhomogeneous, is not even worth discussing. Although scientifically worthless, and surely fabricated for propaganda purposes, Chi's "guess" served well for many years in providing authoritative and "conservative" estimates, not only for political leaders and their media conduits, but even for serious students of the war. Bernard Fall was taken in by Chi, and Frances FitzGerald in her influential *Fire in the Lake* follows Fall in giving a "conservative estimate" that "some fifty thousand people of all economic stations were killed" in the course of the land reform. [200] Because of their reputations as opponents of the war, Fall and FitzGerald have played an especially important role in the perpetration of a myth that still flourishes in its third decade of life. [201]

On the basis of an analysis of official figures and credible documents, plus an estimate made by the Diem government itself in 1959, Porter [202] has concluded that a realistic range of executions taking place during the land reform would be between 800 and 2500. These are significant figures, although the upper limit of executions in the Porter estimate is far lower than the indiscriminate massacre in the single Operation Speedy Express described above - and the North Vietnamese did not honor the parties responsible for their excesses.

The Hue Massacres of 1968

As in the case of the land reform bloodbath myth just discussed, official estimates of alleged NLF-DRV killings of civilians at Hue escalated sharply in the fall of 1969 coincident with the Nixon administration's attempt to offset the effects of the October and November surge of organized peace activity and to counteract the exposure of the My Lai massacre in November 1969. Shortly after the Tet offensive itself, Police Chief Doan Cong Lap, of Hue, estimated the number of NLF-DRV killings at about

200, [203] and the mass grave of local officials and prominent citizens allegedly found by the Mayor of Hue contained 300 bodies. (The authenticity of these numbers and responsibility for these bodies is highly debatable, as is discussed below.) But in the fall of 1969 a "captured document" was discovered that mysteriously had been mislaid in the official files for 19 months, in which the enemy allegedly boasts of 2748 persons having been 'eliminated' during the Hue campaign. This document, as the Chi fabrications, served an important public relations need. It was taken at face value by many reporters (e.g., Don Oberdorfer, in his book *Tet*, Doubleday, 1971) despite the curious circumstances of its discovery immediately after the My Lai exposure. Frances FitzGerald here also accepted uncritically the official tale that "the Front and the North Vietnamese forces murdered some three thousand civilians" in their month of terror at Hue in 1968, and she took at face value all GVN allegations of grave findings as well as the "piecing [of] various bits of evidence together" by official U.S. propagandist Douglas Pike. [204] In the hysterical propaganda effusions of Robert Thompson [205], the number of people executed by the Communists was escalated to 5700, and we learn that "in captured documents they gloated over those figures and only complained that they had not killed enough." No documents were identified.

In a careful analysis of the mysterious "captured document," D. Gareth Porter shows that once again the U.S.-Saigon propaganda machine deliberately misused evidence (even granting the authenticity of the document) in an effort to deceive. [206] In the first place, the Vietnamese word "diet" was translated as "eliminate," which implies killing, although the word was used by the NLF in the military sense of putting out of action (killing, wounding, capturing, or inducing to surrender or defect). If the NLF had intended to describe plain killing or deliberate executions, they would have used any number of Vietnamese terms, but not "diet." Second, government propaganda disregarded the fact that the 2748 figure clearly included estimated numbers of enemy troops killed and wounded in combat. This deception was facilitated by mistranslating the word "te" as "administrative personnel" in the version circulated to newsmen when, in fact, according to a standard North Vietnamese dictionary it has the broader meaning of "puppet personnel," which would include both civilian administrators and the military. Third, the propaganda operation produced a list of fifteen categories of "enemies of the people" allegedly targeted for liquidation, when the documents in question never use the quoted phrase and suggest only that those categories of people should be carefully "watched." Those targeted for repression, let alone liquidation, were completely different categories. [207] Fourth, it was claimed that the NLF had blacklists for execution which included "selected non-official and natural leaders of the community, chiefly educators and religionists," when in fact the testimony of Hues chief of secret police contradicts this. According to the latter, the only names on the list of those to be executed immediately were the officers of the secret police of Hue. Other lists were of those who were to be "reeducated." [208] Porter reports that no captured document has yet been produced which suggests that the NLF and DRV had any intention of massacring either civilians or even the established leaders of Hue. Porter further states that the general strategy of the NLF conveyed in the documents, misrepresented by Douglas Pike and his associates, was to try to mobilize and gain support from the masses, organized religious groups, and ordinary policemen. [209]

The documents uniformly attest to an NLF policy of attempting to rally large numbers with minimum reprisals. Most of those killed by the NLF were on "reeducation lists."

Furthermore, the killings took place after the NLF realized that it would have to evacuate the city, then under a massive U.S. attack, and during that evacuation. In Porter's words: [210]

The real lesson of Hue, therefore, is that in circumstances of peace and full political control, the basic Communist policy toward those associated with the Saigon regime would be one of no reprisals, with the exception of key personnel in Saigon's repressive apparatus (and even in these cases, officials can redeem themselves at the last moment by abandoning resistance to the revolutionary forces).

This lesson is the opposite of that which the U.S.-Saigon propaganda machines have succeeded in converting into a myth.

The supporting evidence on the mass graves of alleged massacre victims came belatedly, strictly from official sources. The numbers game obscures the fact that very large numbers of civilians were killed in the U.S.-Saigon recapture of Hue by the massive and indiscriminate use of firepower. David Douglas Duncan, the famous combat photographer, says of the recapture, that it was "a total effort to root out and kill every enemy soldier. The mind reels at the carnage, cost, and ruthlessness of it all." [211] Townsend Hoopes, who had special access to information as a high DOD official, states that in the recapture effort 80% of the buildings were reduced to rubble, and that "in the smashed ruins lay 2,000 dead civilians...." [212] This number exceeds the highest estimates of NLF-DRV killings, including official ones, that are not demonstrable propaganda fabrications.

Some of the civilian casualties of this assault were put in mass graves by NLF personnel alongside their own casualties (according to NLF-DRV sources), and a large number of civilians were bulldozed into mass graves by the "allies." [213] The NLF claim to have buried 2000 victims of the bombardment in mass graves. Oberdorfer says that 2800 "victims of the occupation" were discovered in mass graves, but he gives no reason for believing that these were victims of the NLF-DRV "political slaughter" rather than people killed in the bombardment. He seems to have relied entirely on the assertions of the Ministries of Propaganda.

An interesting feature of the mass graves is that independent journalists never were allowed to be present at their opening, and that they had difficulty locating their precise whereabouts despite repeated requests. [214] One of the authors spoke recently with an American Marine who was present at the first publicized grand opening; he informed us that the reporters present were carefully hand-picked reliables, that the bodies were not available for inspection, and that he observed tracks and scour marks indicative of the use of bulldozers (which the DRV and NLF did not possess). [215] Perhaps the only western physician to have examined the graves, the Canadian Dr. Aije Vennema, found that the number of victims in the grave sites he examined were inflated in the U.S.-Saigon count by over sevenfold, totaling only 68 instead of the officially claimed 477; that most of them had wounds and appeared to be victims of the fighting, and that most of the bodies he saw were clothed in military uniforms. [216]

Little attention has been paid to the possibility that massacre victims at Hue may have been killed neither by the NLF-DRV nor U.S. firepower, but rather by the returning Saigon military and political police. Many friends of the NLF "surfaced" after a

government formed by the revolutionaries in Hue, or otherwise revealed their sympathies. With the retreat of the NLF and DRV forces from Hue in 1968 many cadres and supporters were left in a vulnerable position as potential victims of Saigon retribution -- and Saigon has never demonstrated the tolerance and faith in "reeducation" shown by the revolutionaries. Evidence has come to light that large-scale retaliatory killing took place in Hue by the Saigon forces after its recapture. In a graphic description by Italian journalist Oriana Fallaci it is concluded that: "Altogether, there have been 1,100 killed [after 'liberation' by Saigon forces]. Mostly students, university teachers, priests. Intellectuals and religious people at Hue have never hidden their sympathy for the NLF." [217]

In any case, given the very confused state of events and evidence, plus the total unreliability of U.S.-Saigon "proofs," at a minimum it can be said that the NLF-DRV "bloodbath" at Hue has been grossly exaggerated. It seems fairly clear that U.S. firepower "saving" the Vietnamese killed a great many more civilians than did the NLF and DRV. It is not unlikely that political killings by the Saigon authorities may have exceeded any massacres by the NLF and DRV at Hue. Porter's analysis of the NLF documents used by U.S.-Saigon propagandists suggests that mass political killings were neither contemplated nor consistent with revolutionary strategy at Hue. The evidence indicates that "the vast majority of policemen, civil servants and soldiers were initially on 'reeducation' rather than on liquidation lists, but the number of killings mounted as the military pressure on the NLF and North Vietnamese mounted." [218] It is also of interest here, as in the land reform case, that the retreating Front forces "were severely criticized by their superiors for excesses which had 'hurt the revolution.'" [219] We have not yet heard of any such self-criticism coming from U.S. and Saigon superiors for their more extensive impersonal or political killings at Hue.

We have discussed several of the more blatant exercises of the U.S.-Saigon propaganda machines, but it must be emphasized that even their day-to-day reports, which constitute the great mass of information about Indochina, must be treated with comparable skepticism. On the rare occasions when competent reporters have made serious investigations, the information presented by U.S. and Saigon sources has turned out to be no less tainted. The Japanese reporter Katsuichi Honda once undertook to investigate the weekly report of the General Information Bureau of the U.S. Army in Saigon entitled "Terrorist Activities by Viet Cong." Pursuing "one isolated case" that interested him, he discovered [220] that not only was amazingly brutal and persistent terrorism occurring regularly, it was actually being shielded from public scrutiny by Saigon's "information control." It soon appeared that the murders were not done by the National Liberation Front at all. There were, it seemed, innumerable "terrible facts" which had been secretly hushed up behind the scenes of the intensifying Vietnam War.

In the case in question, he discovered that the assassination of five Buddhist student volunteers, officially victims of Viet Cong terror, had apparently been carried out by government forces. In another case, "drunken soldiers of the Government army quarrelling among themselves threw grenades, and some civilian bystanders were killed," the case again being reported "as another instance of 'Viet Cong terrorism'."

In other cases, the facts have emerged only by accident. To mention one particularly grotesque example, the camp where the remnants of the My Lai massacre had been relocated was largely destroyed by ARVN air and artillery bombardment in the spring of 1972. The destruction was attributed routinely to Viet Cong terror. The truth was revealed by Quaker service workers in the area. [221]

These examples, of course, not only point up the fact that in the instances in question the official reports were lies and deceptions, and in some cases were converted into official myths; the more important conclusion is that the official sources have extremely limited credibility. They raise questions, but provide no reliable answers.

ACCELERATING BLOODBATH IN SOUTH VIETNAM: THE THIEU POLICE STATE

Thieu and the Thieu regime represent the last word in counterrevolutionary "stabilization." This end product of "Vietnamization" is a centralized, corrupt and exceptionally brutal police state. It is the ultimate satellite - the pure negative, built on antiCommunism, violence, and external sustenance. The base of the Thieu regime is a huge foreign-organized and -financed military and police apparatus; its own population is increasingly brutalized and "pacified" as enemy. At the same time, its foreign sponsors speak, virtually without challenge, of a role in helping to bring "security" to the population undergoing a unique process of terrorization. Ngo Cong Duc, former deputy and president of the Saigon publishers association, recently estimated not only a minimum of 200,000 political prisoners, but that a million South Vietnamese had been incarcerated at one time or another in South Vietnam's prisons. [222]

With American "know-how" placed in the hands of the most fanatic and vicious elements of the dying old order in South Vietnam, the modes and scope of torture and systematic police violence in the Thieu state bear comparison with anything Europe produced during the heyday of fascism. (There are no crematoria in South Vietnam, but methods of torture there are more refined and more broadly employed; even Hitler did not engage in crop defoliation or wholesale bombing and forced transfer of a large part of his own agrarian population.) Electrical and water torture, the ripping out of fingernails, enforced drinking of solutions of powdered lime, the driving of nails into prisoners' _ bones (kneecaps or ankles), beatings ending in death, have become standard operating procedure in the Thieu prisons. [223] In Quang Ngai, for example, Dr. Marjorie Nelson saw "dozens of patients who had coughed up, vomited or urinated blood after being beaten about the chest, back and stomach." [224] In another AFSC report: "A 17- year old boy, near death, had been unable to urinate for four days and was in extreme pain. After treatment by a Quaker doctor, we were informed that the prisoner had been tortured by electrical charges to his genital organs. A young girl had seizures, stared into space and exhibited symptoms of loss of memory. She said she had been forced to drink a lime solution many times while being interrogated." [225]

Following the release of ten students from Thieu's jails in April, these students put themselves on display in a college laboratory. One of them was in a state of semi-shock and was still being fed dextrose intravenously. His fingernails were blackened as a result of pins and slivers of wood being inserted under them. His hearing had been impaired by soapy water having been poured into his ears. Luu Hoang Thao, Deputy Chairman of the Van Hanh Student Association, described what happened to him after his arrest, as follows: [226]

For the first three days, the police beat me continuously. They didn't ask me any questions or to sign anything. They just beat my knee caps and neck with their billy clubs. Then they beat me with chair legs. When a chair leg broke, they took another one. I was beaten until I was unconscious. When I regained consciousness, they beat me again. Finally, after three days, they asked me to sign a paper they had already written. They read the paper but would not let me see it. I wouldn't sign it, so they beat me some more. They put pins under my fingernails. They attached electrodes to my ears, my tongue and my penis. They forced soapy water into my mouth, tramping

on my stomach when it became bloated with water. Then they hung me from the ceiling and extinguished lighted cigarettes in my nipples and penis.

In a still more recent (1972) study of the treatment of prisoners in South Vietnam, the Quaker team from Quang Ngai Province reports that there has been a further increase in torture in that stricken country. [227] Ngo Cong Duc claims that the typical prisoner in South Vietnam "undergoes three torture sessions at the arresting agency, with the most brutal design to force the divulgence of names. [228] The evidence streaming in from prisons all over the Thieu state indicates that it is not only the torture capital of the world, but that in scope and viciousness of torture, the "Vietnamized" South Vietnam may set a historic precedent.

Under Vietnamization the previously tenuous rule of law has been terminated completely; the other side of the coin is the rise and triumph of essentially unrestrained police powers to seize, imprison and molest. (As an illustration, one recent Thieu Decree-Law states: "Those persons considered dangerous to the national defense and public security may be interned in a prison or designated area, or banished from designated areas for a maximum of two years, which is renewable.") We have already quoted former military intelligence officer Michael Uhi, who pointed out several years ago that large numbers of detainees, the majority women and children, are "captured" in repeated dragnet operations, "and whatever looked good in the catch, regardless of evidence, was classified as VCI... Not only was there no due process" applied to these prisoners, "fully all the detainees were brutalized and many were literally tortured." [229] In 1972 arrests were proceeding at an estimated rate of 14,000 to 15,000 persons per month. [230] The victims of this process have no protections in the Thieu state, especially if they are ordinary citizens seized in countryside villages.

The breakdown of what resembled any legal system has been paralleled by a huge increase in the numbers of police. The National Police Force, which is only one of a dozen agencies legally authorized to make arrests, was enlarged from 16,000 in 1963, to 88,000 in 1969; under Vietnamization the numbers rose to 122,000 in 1972 and still further increases are contemplated. Concurrently, there has been a pervasive spread of a large police-intelligence network throughout South Vietnam.

A police state is a prison state, and the Thieu state probably leads all others (even Indonesia) in the number of political prisoners. Over 200 national prisons and hundreds of local jails in South Vietnam house an estimated population of over 200,000 prisoners. [231] A great many of these prisoners are middle-of-the-road students, clergy, intellectuals, and labor leaders who have shown some interest in political affairs and therefore constitute a "threat" to the leaders of the police state. Under Vietnamization the Thieu government has engaged in a determined effort to destroy any non-communist opposition to its rule, largely by means of intimidation and violence. The vast repressive machinery of the Thieu regime has been employed to a great extent against these center elements, which it has properly regarded as threatening to its rule. The degeneration of this state is so extreme, however, that a great many subjects of police terror are essentially "random" victims - brutalized as a matter of course once they have fallen into police hands (as in the dragnet seizures described by Uhl above).

Jane and David Barton, whose on-the-spot account of South Vietnam is reproduced in the appendix, described the treatment meted out to the wife of a lieutenant in the Saigon army: [232]

We encountered a woman, Nguyen Thi Sanh, on March 6 [1973], in the prisoners' section of the hospital. Her body was swollen all over and had black and blue marks; she was immobilized on her bed, her eyes swollen and almost shut. She is a native of Duc My, district of Mo Duc. Four days earlier, she left her house to go to the fields; the village chief stopped her, accused her of wanting to make contact with soldiers of the P.R.G. She answered that she herself, her six children and her husband -- a lieutenant of the Saigon army -- had fled the communists six times, but the village chief ordered the police to interrogate her and beat her. She was severely beaten at the district center and sent to the provincial interrogation center, but she arrived there in such a state that she was hospitalized.

Many of the maltreated are victims of attempts at shakedowns. Staff of the American Friends Service Committee reported speaking with a young woman who had been imprisoned and tortured for rejecting the advances of an ARVN officer who had friends in the police. [233] And many arrests have payoffs in bribes from the families of the imprisoned, solicited or offered with knowledge that these may be useful in reducing the severity of tortures to be applied. [234]

Although it is sometimes said that the Thieu government is "a coalition of the extreme Right" (a description by the pro-Thieu Saigon Daily News), this characterization is rejected by informed Vietnamese, who prefer the term "Mafia1" to describe the Thieu coalition; they point to the huge thievery, the still common involvement in the heroin trade, and the long and parasitic dependence of this tiny faction on some foreign power for survival. The repressive character of the Thieu state epitomizes the long-term incapacity of the Diem regime and its increasingly militarized successors to respond to grievances except by violence. [235] With Thieu the blend of egotism, fanatical anti-communism, and a life of professional military service under foreign sponsorship, brings repression and police state violence to a new level of refinement.

The U.S. role in the police-repression apparatus of the Thieu state is simple [236]; it finances, advises, provides technological improvements, and affords a public relations cover for the direct instruments of terror. From the time of Diem the United States has placed great weight on the police and intelligence; the funding and advising of the prison-police-intelligence ensemble of South Vietnam is now almost two decades old. A spokesman for AID told Congress: [237]

AID and its predecessor agencies have supported public safety programs [essentially police] in Vietnam since 1955... AID's task has been to assist the National Police in recruiting, training and organizing a force for the maintenance of law and order... AID has provided police specialists to train Saigon's police, and advise them at all levels, and to work in Thieu's "Public Safety" programs. Over \$100 million was spent on Public Safety in Vietnam from 1968 through 1971. [238] The Province Interrogation Centers which, according to former AID employee Jacqueney, uniformly employ torture, are funded directly by the United States. [239] The pacification programs in general, including Phoenix, have been paid for by the United States, at a cost estimated conservatively at about \$5 billion for the period 1968-71. [240] AID has put more money into South Vietnamese prisons than schools, and has

funded the construction of additional Tiger Cages for Con Son prison, even smaller than those already located on the Island. [241]

Advice has also been continuous, extending both to general strategy and specific tactics. William Colby indicated: "The function of U.S. advice and support was to initiate and support a Vietnamese effort which can be taken up and maintained by the Vietnamese alone ... [and] a considerable degree of advice and support of the GVN pacification program has come from the U.S. side over the years." [242] In recent years, in addition to Phoenix, U.S. advice and funds have gone toward [243]

Provision of commodity and advisory support for a police force of 108,000 men by the end of Fiscal 1971;... assisting the National Identity Registration Program (N.I.R.P.) to register more than 12,000,000 persons 15 years of age and over by the end of 1971; continuing to provide basic and specialized training for approximately 40,000 police annually; providing technical assistance to the police detention system, including planning and supervision of the construction of facilities for an additional 8,000 inmates during 1970; and helping to achieve a major increase in the number of police presently working at the village level.

Advice includes the introduction of western technology to improve Third World "security." Some examples are mentioned in the AID statement quoted above. Another illustration was provided by a former prisoner in the Con Son Tiger Cages, who reported: [244]

I remember one thing done by the Americans during their visiting tours. It happened to my cage. Usually we were chained in a kind of ordinary shackle made in the form of the number 8, where the legs and hands go through the two holes of the number 8. Then, one day, three Americans came and inspected the shackles, the chains ... They showed signs of disagreement with these. A couple of days later, the number 8 cuffs were replaced with another kind of fetters. These new kinds of fetters had something like "In Good Will" with (word missing) on it. It is the kind of fetters that whenever the prisoners tried to move their legs, the fetters would lock further and further one step and yet another step through them.

Clearly the U.S. has played the decisive role in the evolution of South Vietnamese political life over the past several decades. United States authorities have not merely accommodated to events thrust upon them from the outside, as advisor, controller of the purse strings, and occupying power, the U.S. has had critical leverage, which it has exercised time and again to make specific choices. [245] The character of the Thieu regime reflects a series of consistent decisions made in Washington, and it expresses a preference and choice as to the nature of a client state that is not confined to South Vietnam. The Saigon authorities, in general, have gone along with U.S. advice, partly because of their proclivities, partly because they are dependents, but also because each new policy innovation has meant an additional inflow of cash which the Saigon leadership knew could be absorbed readily into the existing system of corruption.

In addition to funding, advising, and providing the equipment and know-how, the United States has provided a moral cover for the Thieu state. This results in part from the fact that the United States is a "democracy" its officials pretend that democracy and an open society are among its serious objectives in intervening. Thus moderate

scholars and others determined to think well of the United States have found it possible to employ the argument from long-run benefit. This mystification is furthered by the constant reference of U.S. officials to "encouraging developments" in their client police states, and to the fact of "our working with the Vietnamese government," which is making very substantial strides" toward eliminating the unjustifiable abuses that we all recognize and are doing our level best to eradicate. [246]

The apologetics include more or less continuous lying, especially at the higher levels of officialdom, as when Colby and Sullivan suggest that the 21,000 or 41,000 killings under Phoenix were all or almost all combat deaths. Or in Colby's constant reference to pacification as a program for the "defense of the people" against somebody else's terror. Or the statement of Randolph Berkeley, Chief of the Corrections and Detention Division of AID: "Generally speaking we have found the Vietnamese very light in their punishment." [247] Or the statement of Frank E. Walton, Director of the AID Public Safety Program, that Con Son prison is "like a Boy Scout Recreational Camp." [248] The same Frank Walton, who denied any knowledge of the Tiger Cages in 1970, signed a report dated October 1, 1963, which stated that: [249]

In Con Son II some of the hardcore communists keep preaching the 'party' line, so these 'Reds' are sent to the Tiger Cages in Con Son I where they are isolated from all others for months at a time. This confinement may also include rice without salt and water - the United States prisons' equivalent of bread and water. It may include immobilization - the prisoner is bolted to the floor, handcuffed to a bar or rod, or leg irons with the chain through an eyebolt, or around a bar or rod.

The bureaucracy that could implement American policies in South Vietnam clearly will not hesitate to cover up by suppression and lies any forms of violence that contribute to a constructive bloodbath.

Saigon's Political Prisoners and the Accelerating Bloodbath

It is an important fact that a key stumbling block in the signing of the Peace Agreement was the disposition of civilian prisoners. Virtually the only "progress" achieved by Kissinger between October 1972 and the January 1973 settlement date was that the "question of the return of Vietnamese civilian personnel captured and detained in South Vietnam" was left unresolved in the final Agreement, whereas the October plan suggested, albeit vaguely, that they were to be released on a firm time schedule. However, the prisoners would be released very shortly under the January agreement in any case, if the United States and Saigon had any intention of adhering to the political principles and modes of resolution of the issues incorporated into the Agreement. The Agreement prohibits reprisals and guarantees freedom of organization, beliefs, and political activities (Article 11), and it provides for the disposition of civilian detainees "in a spirit of national reconciliation and concord," and with both parties pledged to "do their utmost to resolve this question within 90 days after the cease fire comes into effect" (Article 8(c)). In brief, the political prisoners could be an important issue only on the assumption of an, anticipated wholesale violation of the terms of the Agreement and continuation of Thieu control via terror.

A major concern of many observers has been that Thieu would use any period of grace given under this Agreement to carry out a large-scale liquidation of political prisoners. It is evident that it is in Thieu's interest to violate the Agreement to the limit

of his capacity, since a renewed U.S. direct involvement not only would provide a welcome inflow of cash but also offers his sole long-term hope for survival. It is possible, but not certain, that he may not be able to bring this about; and he may be under pressure from his North American sustainer to move a certain distance toward adherence to the Agreement - not so far as to negotiate a political settlement or abandon his mode of control by terror, but at least freeing substantial numbers of political prisoners in order to parallel the PRG-DRV release of U.S. and Saigon prisoners.

That Thieu will release a large fraction of his political prisoners, in condition to resume normal lives as citizens of South Vietnam, is, unfortunately, by no means assured. Freeing these prisoners would be costly to Thieu, as he has a great many and their experiences in his torture chambers will not have endeared him to them. His American sponsors have made no serious objections to his large-scale use of torture and political murders in the past, and the world at large has become insensitized after many years of torment seemingly beyond the control of decent humanity. A serious possibility remains that the mass murder of political prisoners may take place -- may be taking place -- in Thieu's prisons, if these actions can be carried out without undue publicity and without inducing major international reactions.

This is why many recent developments in South Vietnam have been so disquieting. Thieu has threatened a bloodbath in quite explicit terms, and his stated intentions have elicited little protest in the West. Shortly after the peace scare of late October, government backed groups in Danang began distributing leaflets which "called upon South Vietnamese to 'exterminate the Communists' before, during and after the cease-fire." [250] Thieu has made it plain on several occasions that he intends to kill all Communists, or that they all must be killed before peace is possible. [251] On January 22, 1973, just a few days before the signing of the January 27th "reconciliation" Agreement, Thieu issued a series of edicts, still in effect, that virtually nullified Articles 8 and 11 of the forthcoming settlement. Among them is one that says: "All police and military forces are permitted to shoot to kill all those who urge the people to demonstrate, and those who cause disorders or incite other persons to follow communism..." [252] This quite open announcement of intent to disregard the main elements of the Agreement was largely ignored by U.S. media.

DRV and U.S. officials agree that the Thieu regime has "drawn up long lists of opposition political figures who would be arrested when an accord is signed." [253] Thieu's closest adviser, Hoang Duc Nha, stated in a recent interview that with Thieu in power, the communists "are afraid of an Indonesian-style coup even in a coalition. They are afraid we would cut their throats." [254] Nha does not suggest that this fear is unreasonable. After the Diem regime was installed in power by the United States in 1954 it hunted down former resistance fighters, many inactive and some even hostile to the Vietminh, with such blind ferocity, that (in the words of a Rand study) their campaign "created conditions which surviving Vietminh agents were able to exploit in rebuilding the insurgent organization." [255] The Saigon diplomatic representative in Phnom Penh in 1959 told a reporter: "You must understand that we in Saigon are desperate men. We are a government of desperadoes." [256] True enough, though the Diem regime was authentically nationalist and relatively benevolent in comparison with the Thieu clique. The desperation stems in part from the fact that, as each successive American client has found, terror does not make for popular support, but

on the contrary generates more "communists." More violence is required to give the people "security." Thus, after many years of American-sponsored protective terror, Thieu once more acknowledged to Saigon officials in early 1973 his continued inability to compete with the PRG on a purely political basis: "If we let things go the population may vote for the Communists, who know how to make propaganda." [257]

Furthermore, quite apart from the stated intentions and survival needs of the Thieu state, the threatened extensive roundups of "enemy suspects" (potentially 90% of the population) did take place on a large scale in 1972. In June 1972 several thousand persons were arrested and shipped to Con Son Island, many of them "merely relatives of political suspects" and many of them women and children. [258] George Hunter reports that: [259]

Special Branch Police swooped down on houses all over South Vietnam and arrested anyone under the remotest suspicion of being "left-wing" ... The government has a blacklist of suspects, but I understand that wives, mothers and fathers - anyone with the slimmest association with those on it are being caught in the net.

A vast roundup took place during the period of threat of a Peace Agreement in October and November of 1972. On November 10, 1972, Hoang Duc Nha proudly announced the seizure of over 40,000 persons over the previous two-week period. Thus the mammoth scale of arrests to which the population of Free Vietnam has been subject for years was sharply intensified, at just the time when Thieu and Nixon were readying themselves for signing an agreement committing them to a policy of national reconciliation. Again, this major development was largely ignored by the media.

Another closely related development indicating that Thieu's political prisoners are threatened with extermination is the recent use by Thieu of several devices that obscure their numbers, whereabouts, and status. This is facilitated by the massive roundups themselves, but at least two other techniques have been employed. In an official telegram sent by the Commander in Chief of Thieu's police and the Saigon head of Phoenix on April 5, 1973, police and other arresting agents are advised as follows on the proper classification of detainees: [260]

Do not use the expression "condemned communist or communist agent." Write only: "Disturbs the peace."

A disturber of the peace can be regarded as a common criminal; a communist agent would be a political prisoner covered by the January 27th Agreement. This practice can be supplemented by the reclassification of current prisoners to common law status. For example, Mme. Ngo Ba Thanh, president of the Saigon-based Women's Committee Struggling for the Right to Live, with a degree from Columbia University Law School, was among those recently transferred to a prison for common-law criminals in Bien Hoa Province. Documents from inside the prisons allege that prison authorities have incited common-law prisoners to provoke and even to kill reclassified political prisoners. [261]

The other technique used by the Thieu government has been the alleged release of political prisoners, not to the PRC and DRV as stipulated in the January Agreements, but at large within South Vietnam. In early February Thieu announced the release of 40,000 prisoners, with no 'specifics as to names and places of release.' [262] The media failed to see the most significant aspect of this action, portraying it as a

magnanimous act, although in technical violation of the Agreement. The crucial point was missed that, by this device, prisoners who are murdered can be alleged to have been "released" and thus are no longer a Thieu responsibility. [263] Families of prisoners, held at Phu Quoc and whose terms had expired, report that they were informed of the prisoners' release, yet these individuals have disappeared. [264]

Another ominous development is the accelerated mistreatment of political prisoners. Important official evidence of this is the reduction of the prisoner rice ration from 700 to 500 grams per day in January 1972. [265] Official rations for refugees have also been cut sharply, [266] which suggests a new stage in "pacification," with Thieu and his sponsor extending the policy of "drying up the seas" to the prisons and refugee camps. The mechanism is to weaken and destroy by starvation and physical debilitation. Prison authorities, in recent months, also have been mingling healthy prisoners with others in advanced stages of contagious diseases such as tuberculosis - another happy innovation in pacification. Direct physical violence against the prisoners has greatly increased. [267] As explained by Jean Pierre Debris, recently released from Chi Hoa, "The aim of the Thieu regime is to break the prisoners physically so that they will never be able to take any part in national life again ... The conditions under which thousands are held are critical and becoming more dramatic at the present time." [268]

Finally, reports of the direct killing of prisoners have been filtering through with increased frequency. The two French prisoners released in December reported that just prior to their departure "there were massive deportations to the Paulo Condor [Con Son] camp," the scene of numerous reported atrocities in the past. They speculate that their sudden release may have been motivated by concern that they might witness what they expect will now take place," a liquidation operation which might begin in the prisons." [269] Amnesty International since has cited "evidence that selective elimination of opposition members had begun" in the prisons, and a report that 300 prisoners being moved from Con Son to the mainland were killed. [270] On Sunday, March 25, NBC Monitor News transmitted a report from the Swedish office of Amnesty International that observers have sighted thousands of bodies in prison uniforms floating in the area off South Vietnam. The PRC and DRV report a steady stream of killings and disappearances, impossible to verify at present but frequently specific as to place, and hardly to be ruled out in the light of processes at work in the Thieu state.

At a press conference held on November 2, 1972, Amnesty International urged the acceptance, by all parties to the Vietnam conflict, of a Protocol specifically oriented to the protection of political prisoners held in Indochina. Mr. Sean McBride, chairman of the Executive Committee of Amnesty International (and former Irish Minister of External Affairs), the author of the Protocol, estimated that there were at least 200,000 civilian detainees in Indochina (a number which must have risen significantly since then). The Protocol would have established a supervisory authority to take an inventory of prisoners and to fix the reasons for their detention; it would have provided for an independent Judicial Review Board to review prisoner classifications and to resolve disputes on the application of the Protocol; and it would have involved the appointment of a Commissioner to facilitate the rehabilitation, repatriation and resettlement of civilian prisoners.

The Amnesty proposal was motivated explicitly by the failure of the Kissinger-Tho agreement of October to provide clearly for the prompt release of civilian detainees, and by the lack of any protection for civil prisoners similar to the guarantees theoretically afforded military prisoners of war under the 1949 Geneva Convention. There is no question that the Amnesty move was directed mainly, if not entirely, to the threat posed to the political prisoners of Thieu. It goes without saying that the United States, despite its alleged concern over bloodbaths, showed no interest whatsoever in this effort to prevent a real (but "constructive") one.

Contradictions abound in the Orwellian world produced by American counterrevolutionary intervention. Opposed to violence and bloodbaths, the United States and its clients in South Vietnam have employed both on such a massive scale and in such an undiscriminating manner that they have probably created more "communists" than they have destroyed, and they have destroyed many. The United States has forged a state and selected a leadership that exists solely by and for violence, under whose auspices torture and brutalization have become institutionalized as the virtually exclusive mode of handling dissent and social problems. Openly acknowledging an inability to compete politically with the PRG, surviving solely by American-sponsored terror, its pacification policies are nonetheless still referred to by American officials (Colby, Sullivan, etc.) as an attempt to "protect" and provide "security" for the population. Perhaps other terror regimes have been as brutal in their assault on human dignity and life as that of Thieu and Washington. It is certain that none have been so hypocritical.

APPENDIX

Report by Jane and David Barton, "Indochina - Quang Ngai Province Five Months After The Peace Agreement" (June 20, 1973)

Two Americans, Jane and David Barton, have worked for two years in the hospitals of Quang Ngai province in central Vietnam. In this sector as in others, the ceasefire and the accords ratified by the international conference have scarcely changed the life of the population controlled by the Saigon regime.¹ the prisons are full, the police continue to torture, the Americans finance and "advise" those who direct the systems of camps and prisons. We publish the testimony of Jane and David Barton.

Since the ceasefire agreements, the Saigon government continues to detain, to arrest, to interrogate, and to torture a large number of civilians in Quang Ngai. At present there are around two thousand political prisoners in the province. At the Provincial Interrogation Center, there are more than a thousand; a thousand are in the prison of Quang Ngai and hundreds of others are in the eight district detention centers. During two years' time, we have encountered hundreds of detainees. We have never seen a single prisoner arrested for a criminal offense. The detainees of Quang Ngai wear labels giving name and registration number; often the words "political prisoner" are written. At least 90% of these prisoners are political prisoners and not prisoners of war.

Since the January agreements, the number of prisoners has remained constant. The majority of the persons arrested before January have not been released. One example. Phan Thi Thi, a woman sixty-seven years old, was incarcerated on November 17, 1972 in the district of Mo Duc; she had transported 1 kilogram of rice into a zone considered "low security." She was taken to the police headquarters of Mo Duc, interrogated, beaten, tortured. During this session, her brain was affected and half of her body is paralyzed. The first time that we saw her, in the prisoners' section of the hospital, she was lying on sheets of cardboard. She was naked, and under her a hole was cut out for her relief. She was greatly weakened, weighed about 35 kilos (77 pounds), and the others prisoners fed her [1]. After the signing of the accords, the police took her to the district capital to interrogate her again, in spite of her paralysis and although she was hardly able to speak. After repeated requests, we were able to "transfer her temporarily" to the Quang Ngai hospital, but on April 14, when her health had become critical to the point that she was placed in an intensive care ward, the police refused to release her. Phan Thi Thi remains incarcerated.

This is also the case for women who have been imprisoned for much longer periods. Huynh Thi Tuyet, a thirty-six-year-old woman, was arrested in March, 1967. She says that she was taken with other villagers by the army close to her village, in the district of Son Tinh. Many other villagers were freed because the soldiers had had enough of watching the group of "prisoners," but, she says, she was taken together with 18 persons, including a child of 7 and a man of 59, to the prison of Quang Ngai, where she remains ever since, without knowing of what she is accused. Marjorie Nelson, an American doctor, has examined her several times. Huynh Thi Tuyet continues to consider herself a forgotten prisoner who may remain so for a long time to come. Here are some other cases: Ho Thi Nhung, thirty-six-year-old woman, mother of a baby a few weeks old, suffering from respiratory difficulties. Phan Suong, 49, victim

of advanced tuberculosis and pneumonia; Trinh Thi Cung, a young woman of 18, suffering from venereal disease after having been raped six times by men of the Saigon army; Nguyen Thi Nuoi, a woman of 42, with cancer of the lymphatic passages. Torture by Electricity

The authorities customarily take the "suspects" from the detention center to the interrogation center, a building located in the middle of the detention complex; there they are interrogated and often tortured. The situation has not changed at all since January. We were able to prove this by means of medical examinations, interviews, direct testimony of the prisoners, and also by means of X-rays and photographs. Phan Thi Nguyet, a nineteen-year-old woman, found herself in the interrogation center and in prison six months before the agreements. The police wanted to know whether her father, who left for the DRV when she was 9, had communicated with her, since rumor had it that he had returned to the sector. Nguyet was tortured on eight occasions before the accords; after the signing, she was taken from the prison back to the interrogation center where she was tortured by electricity; she was made to swallow soapy water and was beaten four times between the 2nd of February and the 23rd of March. Her nervous system was affected, and her left leg is paralyzed.

Several people arrested after the ceasefire have told us their stories. We encountered a woman, Nguyen Thi Sanh, on March 6, in the prisoners' section of the hospital. Her body was swollen all over and had black and blue marks; she was immobilized on her bed, her eyes swollen and almost shut. She is a native of Duc My, district of Mo Duc. Four days earlier, she left her house to go to the fields; the village chief stopped her, accusing her of wanting to make contact with soldiers of the P.R.C. She answered that she herself, her six children and her husband - a lieutenant of the Saigon army had fled the communists six times, but the village chief ordered the police to interrogate her and beat her. She was severely beaten at the district center and sent to the provincial interrogation center, but she arrived there in such a state that she was hospitalized. At this time she is in the Quang Ngai Interrogation Center.

Lam is twelve. He was arrested after the ceasefire and sent to the interrogation center. When the police apprehended him, he carried two vials of penicillin in his pocket; he was accused of carrying medicine to the P.R.C. He now remains at the interrogation center; still, the authorities know that his father is a nurse at the Quang Ngai hospital. His father has stated to the police that Lam was carrying the medicine to a sick aunt.

Loc is seventeen. He is a student. He was arrested by the military police and incarcerated at the provincial interrogation center. Yet his identification papers were in order and he is too young to serve under a flag. The police gave him the choice between enrolling or remaining in the interrogation center for one year, at which time he will be old enough to become a soldier. All of these acts occurred after the ceasefire.

Since January, the Saigon government has scarcely demonstrated a spirit of reconciliation. The festival of Tet came shortly after the signing of the accords. The government authorities of Quang Ngai clearly showed their intentions in the instructions published regarding family reunions. Trucks equipped with loudspeakers announced to the inhabitants that if members of their families who worked for the

P.R.G. or the Northerners attempted to return home for the festival, the neighbors should beat them to death.

Harsh measures were taken by the police and the army in order to strictly control and limit movements of the population [2]. Once again it was announced by loudspeakers mounted on trucks to the tens of thousands of refugees of the provincial capital and vicinity that it was forbidden on penalty of death by gunfire to go onto the ancestral lands and into ancestral homes. Since the signing of the accords, no movement has been authorized between zones.

Thousands Of Shells

On May 1st, Nguyen Quy, a grandfather 74 years old, deaf and nearly blind, was arrested and imprisoned in the detention center of Son Tinh. We learned this from a person who worked at the hospital. His house was located in the region of My Lai (scene of one of the most "famous" massacres); almost a year ago, fighting was going on there. He sought refuge with his ten-year-old granddaughter on the island of Ly Son. After that, he decided to return to the mainland and to pay a visit to friends in the camp for refugees from the My Lai region. The refugee camp is made of tents set up on a sandy point of the Tra-Khuc river, just outside of Quang Ngai. On his arrival, he was arrested by the police, who did not believe his story; they took him away, leaving his granddaughter alone and in tears in the camp. Friends came to ask us to help him. The chief of the 'special police' (in fact specialized in torture) of the district of Son Tinh declared that the old man presented a potential danger, since he might have stayed in a zone that had come under the control of the P.R.Q. Although he had valid identification papers and had worked for the government in the past, it was necessary to interrogate him. It took us four weeks of constant efforts to have him freed.

At the rehabilitation' center of the provincial hospital, more wounded have been admitted since the ceasefire than during the same period last year. Most of the wounds are attributed to Saigon artillery shells, to exchanges of fire and to mines. Almost every evening since the ceasefire, we have heard government artillery. An American diplomat told us that at Hue, the Saigon forces fire thousands of shells every week because "the more they fire, the more the Americans replace their munitions.

Human Mine Detectors

Liem is a little girl of twelve, a native of Mo Duc; Phuong is a boy of 10, a native of Son Tinh; both of them are paraplegics because they were wounded by shells that fell near their home one night in February. Le Nam is 50; his right leg had to be amputated above the knee; on February 24, he was working in his rice paddy several hundred meters from a P.R.G. flag when a helicopter of the Saigon army fired at him several times. On February 7, on the 5th day of Tet, a man of 70 named Vinh left the Binh Son district refugee camp early in the morning to cultivate his sweet potatoes. Both his legs were cut off by a government army mine that had been set the night before and not deactivated. On February 15, Buoi, a 14-year-old boy, lost his left leg below the knee in a grenade explosion.

We also received first-hand reports from persons from the Batangan peninsula who were forced at gunpoint to lower a P.R.G. flag. Luckily, this time, the ground was not mined, but the Saigon soldiers told the people that they were using them as mine detectors. The story was told to us by Tran Lam, 57 years old, a native of Phu Quy.

The incident, he told us, took place on March 27. Tran Lam was going from the market of Binh Son towards Binh Duc. He told the soldiers that he was old and did not want to die; the soldiers laughed out loud and said that they were young and that he had to die for them....

We also want to say that the United States must be held responsible for these injuries after the ceasefire, for these incarcerations, for the repressive system in which the refugees are held and which the Americans have been financing for years, while Americans advise the Saigon person-net We hope that the ceasefire wi~ be respected, that all the prisoners will be released, and that the Vietnamese will be able to return to the land of their ancestors. Then, if the killing stops, if the prisoners are set free, if the peasants return to their land, the Vietnamese will finally have the possibility of freely determining the future of their country.

[1] Hospitalized prisoners are chained.

NOTES

[1] See T. D. Aliman, *Far Eastern Economic Review*, (May 7,1970).

[2] Charles Meyer, *Derriere le sourire Khmer*, Plon (1971), p.405. Meyer, a long-time French resident of Cambodia and close to the government, remained for a time after the March 1970 coup. Authors' translation.

[3] Nixon Press Conference, November 12,1971, *New York Times* (November 13,1971).

[4] The "aggression from the North" thesis of the Johnson administration, for example, was devastated quickly by analyses of the White Paper of 1965, two of the best being I. F. Stone, "A Reply to the White Paper," *L P Stone's Weekly* (March 8,1965), and the editors of *The New Republic*, "White Paper on Vietnam" (March 13,1965). None of these made a dent on the typical editorial, news article, column, or presentation of Administration handouts, however. Even after the *Pentagon Papers* release, which vindicated the hardest of hard-line dove analyses of aggression (locating it firmly in Washington, D. C.), the mythical truth held firm.

[5] Sir Robert Thomson, Op.-Ed., *New York Times* (June 15, 1972); James Jones, "In the Shadow of Peace," *New York Times Magazine* June 10,1973).

[6] Sidney Hook, "The Knight of the Double Standard," *The Humanist* (January 1971). Earlier, Hook had de- nounced Bertrand Russell for "play[ing] up as deliberate American atrocities the unfortunate accidental loss of life incurred by the efforts of American Military forces to help the South Vietnamese repel the incursions of North Viet- nam and its partisans." "Lord Russell and the War Crimes 'Trial'," *New Leader* (October 24,1966).

[7] In reviewing the impact of the war, Wendell S. Merrick and James N. Wallace concede that "a great many Vietnamese suffered terribly," but note judiciously that "these effects of war would have occurred with or without Americans being here." *U. £ News and World Report* (April 2,1973).

[8] William F. Buckley, Jr., *Boston Globe* (April 23, 1973). Buckley's moralizing was provoked by the reports of returning U.S. POWs. Even if we were to grant the precise accuracy of their reports, they do not begin to compare in horror with the explicit and detailed reports by American veterans of the treatment of Vietnamese prisoners (not to speak of the civilian population) by the American armed forces. Cf., *Vietnam Veterans Against the War*, eds., *Winter Soldier Investigation*, Beacon Press (1972); *The Dellums Committee Hearings on War Crimes in Vietnam*, Vintage (1972); James S. Kunen, *Standard Operating Procedure*, Avon (1971); D. Thorne and C. Butler, eds., *The New Soldier*, Collier (1971). Foreign observers, less circumspect, note that "The Nixon Administration has had nothing to say about the atrocities which have been going on for many years in [Saigon] prisons and which still go on, often under the direct supervision of former American police officers" and note that the American POWs "who talked of oriental tortures were all able to stand up and speak into microphones, showing scars here and there" whereas the handful of prisoners released from the American-run Saigon jails "were all incurably crippled while prolonged malnutrition had turned them into grotesque parodies of humanity." *Far Eastern Economic Review* (March 26, 1973). On the prisons, see Holmes Brown and Don Luce, *Hostages of War*, Indochina Mobile Education Project (1973).

[9] *New York Times* editorial (April 8, 1973).

[10] *Fiscal Year 1970 AID Report* 10 the Ambassador, p.35.

[11] *New York Times* (December 20, 1967).

[12] To use the classic language of Ithiel Pool on the requirements for the maintenance of order on a world-wide scale, in "The Public and the Polity," (by Pool, ed.), *Contemporary Political Science: Toward Empirical Theory*, McCraw-Hill (1967), p.26.

[13] "Stability" is used almost invariably by U. S. officials in an Orwellian sense, synonymous with a set of economic and political arrangements satisfactory to American imperial interests. Thus for the period 1949-69 Thailand represented "stability," China a source of "instability."

[14] In the case of Brazil, for example, "A hard policy of domestic repression has apoliticized national life making it practically impossible for the lower classes to become socially conscious of their plight or to organize for change. Agostino Bono, "Unjolly Green Giant," *Commonweal*, February 2, 1973, p.388-389. They need change desperately, however. A 30 page document recently signed by three Archbishops and 10 Bishops of Northeast Brazil claims that 20% of the population increased its share of the national income from 54.4% to 64.1% over the last decade, and that the top 1% earned more than the bottom 50%. Hunger is "epidemic" and the death rate in Northeast Brazil is 47-I 1000 by age five. See "Torture, murder, hunger in Brazil," *The Guardian* (Manchester), May 19, 1973.

[15] On this matter, see Barrington Moore, *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*, Beacon (1966).

[16] Konrad Kellen, "1971 and Beyond: The View From Hanoi," Rand Corporation (June 1971), pp.14-15.

[17] The flavor of "our" South Vietnam may be captured, however, in the finding by one former AID employee that "I have personally witnessed poor urban people literally quaking with fear when I questioned them about the activity of the secret police in a post election campaign. One poor fisherman in Da Nang, animated and talkative in complaining about economic conditions, clammed up in near terror when queried about the policy..." Theodore Jacqueney, Hearings before Subcommittee of House Committee on Government Operations, U.S. Assistance Programs in Vietnam (July/August 1971), p.251. Hereafter, U.S. Assistance Programs.

[18] This and the quotes that follow are from Jim Hougan, "Greece: Illusion of Stability," The Nation (March 12, 1973).

[19] "Reminders are everywhere in Athens and take one form in the advertising war between Pepsi and Coca-Cola. Before the coup, neither of these soda pops was available in Greece, their importation being forbidden in the interest of the small farmers and fruit growers who produce the raw material for the country's indigenous and delicious soft drinks. All that changed when a Greco-American millionaire, Tom Pappas, negotiated the Coca-Cola franchise with the junta in return for his commitment to build a compensatory \$20 million fruit processing plant." Ibid., p.330.

[20] Quoted in Gabriel Kolko, The Politics of War, Random House (1970), p.214.

[21] Ibid., p.229.

[22] Ibid., p.230

[23] "Philippines: A government that needs U. S. business," Business Week (November 4, 1972), p.42.

[24] "By American choice" in a very literal sense: According to General Khanh, "On January 1964 Wilson [his U. S. advisor] told me a coup d'etat was planned in Saigon and that I was to become President.... On 8 February 1964 I took over as Premier." Interview with the German Magazine Stern, reprinted in Los Angeles New Advocate (April 1-15, 1972). It is interesting to contrast the official disavowals of any "arrogant" attempts to influence client governments, with the matter-of-fact assumption by U.S. officials that they determine who rules in these client states, as disclosed in internal governmental documents. General Taylor, in a briefing of November 27, 1964, for example, speaks with assurance about our "establishing some reasonably satisfactory government" in South Vietnam; and that if not satisfied with the way things are going, "we could try again with another civilian government...: Another alternative would be to invite back a military dictatorship on the model of that headed of late by General Khanh."(Pentagon Papers, Gravel Ed., III, p.669; emphasis added.) Taylor, in fact, expressed his contempt for his Vietnamese puppets quite openly on the public record as well. Thus, he describes Diem's "unexpected resistance" to the American demand for direct participation in civil administration, and adds: "On the chance that Diem might continue to be intransigent, the old search for a possible replacement for him was resumed in State." Later he speaks of "the impetuosity of Diem's American critics

and our opposition to ousting him without a replacement in sight." When General Khanh began to lose his shaky political base, "the question was: If not Khanh, who? This time there was again the possibility that 'Big' Minh might do. He had been behaving quite well.. ." Taylor's attitudes are perhaps no more astonishing than the fact that he is willing to voice them in public. See *Swords and Plowshares*, W.W. Norton & Co., 1972, pp.248, 294, 322.

[25] New York Herald Tribune (February 3, 1964).

[26] Daniel Kirk, "The Bold Words of Kim," New York Times Magazine (January 7, 1973), p.56.

[27] See the discussion of the structural and class incapacity of the U.S.-sponsored South Vietnamese elites to respond constructively to rural grievances in Jeffrey Race's *War Comes to Long An*, University of California (1972), Chapter IV.

[28] "In the six weeks since Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos declared martial law, American businessmen have become increasingly sanguine about their future... According to one U.S. oilman, 'Marcos says, "We'll pass the laws you need-just tell us what you want." ' Marcos badly needs American business support. For one thing, major U.S. companies-such as Jersey Standard, Squibb, Johnson & Johnson, and Colgate-Palmolive-have invested nearly \$2 billion. And Marcos is asking those companies to lobby for substantial U.S. government aid and favorable treatment for Philippine exports. More important, Marcos hopes that if he continues to treat U.S. business right, U.S. bankers will continue to treat him right. The Philippines is burdened with a \$2 billion debt, most of which falls due within three years...'" "Philippines: A Government that Needs U.S. Business," *Business Week* (November 4, 1972), p.42.

A recent article on the Saigon junta's plans indicate that "To' lure foreign money they have worked up some of the most inviting investment laws of any country in the region. ~. [and] South Vietnam [sic] is also keenly interested in the development of postwar tourism with the help of foreign investors.' "Saigon Baits Hook for Big Investors," *New York Times* (January 21, 1973), Section F, p. 49.

[29] Bernard Fall, *Street without Joy*, Rev. Ed., Stackpole (1967), p.373. Fall is often regarded as an opponent of the American intervention in Vietnam. This is inaccurate. He was a bitter anti-Communist and a strong supporter of the goals of the American intervention, though he was later to be appalled at the methods used, and feared that Vietnam would not survive this terroristic onslaught. The simple answer he gives in the text fails to come to grips with why the West systematically gravitated to regimes without popular support.

[30] Frank C. Darling, *Thailand and the United States*, Public Affairs Press (1965), p.65. For some years, Darling was a CIA analyst specializing in Southeast Asia, Thailand in particular.

[31] *Ibid.*, p.169.

[32] Testimony of Leonard Unger, in Senate Foreign Relations Committee Hearings on U.S. Security Agreements and Commitments Abroad, Kingdom of Thailand (1969), p.613. Hereafter, Thailand.

[33] Darling, op cit., p. 111.

[34] Ibid., p.106.

[35] Ibid., p.138.

[36] Thailand, p.639.

[37] Ibid., p. 648.

[38] Ibid., p.611.

[39] Ibid., p. 613.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Myrdal, Asian Drama, Pantheon (1968), v.1, p.486.

[42] Darling, op cit., p. 74.

[43] Ibid., p.117.

[44] Thailand, p.748.

[45] Darling, op cit., p.168.

[46] Ibid., p. 128.

[47] Ibid., p.82.

[48] Ibid., p. 169.

[49] This is reminiscent of the Thieu technique of allegedly "releasing prisoners," not to the PRG as required in the January 1973 agreement, but into the population at large. See the discussion, which follows later in this module, of this device as a potential mechanism for covering up the murder of political prisoners.

[50] Darling, op cit., p. 114.

[51] Ambassador Gauss wrote to Cordell Hull during World War II that Chiang Kai Shek had reminded him that "In the matter of world problems, China is disposed to follow our lead..." Department of State, Relations With China, p.561. Chiang's state, though deeply corrupt and unstable, therefore held out a great potential for becoming "the principal stabilizing factor in the Far East," Yalta Papers, p.353. See note 13.

[52] National Security Council, 542912 (August 20,1954). U.S. Dept. of Defense, United States- Vietnam Relations, 1945-67, book 10, pp. 731ff.; Gov't. Printing Office, 1971.

[53] Alfred W. McCoy, *The Politics of Heroin in Southeast Asia*, Harper (1972), p.88.

[54] The Laotian Ambassador to France was apprehended in Paris in April 1971 with 60 kilos of heroin destined for the United States. *Ibid.*, p.222.

[55] *Ibid.*, Chapters 5 and 7.

[56] *Ibid.*, pp. 166-222.

[57] *Ibid.*, pp. 219-220. On the official cover-up of the complicity of the Saigon leadership-mafia in the heroin trade, see esp. pp. 171-172, 218-219.

[58] See Blase Bonpane, "Our Latin Vietnam," *Los Angeles Times* (February 11,1968); Georgie Ann Ceyer, "U.S. Military Role in Guatemala," *Gazette & Daily*, York, Pa. (December 24,1966).

[59] See Carlos Maria Gutierrez, *The Dominican Republic: Rebellion and Repression*, Monthly Review Press (1972), Chapter 2.

[60] John P. Lewis, *New York Times*, Op. Ed. (December 9,1971).

[61] *New York Times* (January 9,1972).

[62] On this matter see the illuminating analysis by Eqbal Ahmad, "Notes on South Asia in Crisis," *Bulletin of the Concerned Asian Scholars* (1972), v.4, No.1.

[63] "Purely internal" is also used by American officials in an Orwellian sense, meaning not so threatening to our perceived interests as to demand intervention. Thus the Pakistan instance, or the case of Thailand where "the general tendency of most Americans [sic] was to declare that the ruthless suppression of political opposition by the military leaders [who, as we discussed above, were a product and on the payroll of the U.S.] was a purely internal affair. . ." Darling, *op. cit.*, p.129; versus the NLF's "aggression" in South Vietnam, clearly an "external affair."

[64] *New York Times* (January 9,1972).

[65] The quotation, from a government official who followed internal cable reports from Burundi, is taken from Michael Bowen, Gary Freedman, Kay Miller and Roger Morris, *Passing By, The United States and Genocide in Burundi*, 1972, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (undated), p.5. This document is referred to hereafter, as *Pass- mg By*. The Hutu constitute 85 per cent of the population of Burundi, but have been ruled by the fourteen per cent Tutsi minority since the 16th century.

[66] Quoted from *Passing By*, p.6.

[67] On July 14, 1973 the New York Times brought up the subject again in a front page article by Charles Mohr entitled "Exiles Keeping Strife in Burundi Alive." As suggested by the title itself, the article starts out with, and features heavily, the subversive activities of "militant Hutu refugees" allegedly trying to overthrow "the predominantly Tutsi Government." A "major factor" in the Burundi tragedy is the "passionately militant Hutu students in exile," who have disturbed the "relative quiet in recent days after a serious out-break of incidents [sic] in mid-May in which, it is said, thousands of Hutus were slain." Later in the article Mohr discussed further the number of Hutus killed, but finds the matter inconclusive (Tutsis were killed also), and passes on quickly to the disrupting behavior of the Hutu students and refugees. According to the Carnegie study the Burundi government itself many months ago admitted to 80,000 casualties, and "the State Department had authoritative intelligence that the death toll in Burundi was two to three times that number. "Ibid., p.22. The kind of biased, ignorant, and insensitive reporting manifested in the Mohr piece contributes no more to an informed public opinion than the silence which preceded it.

[68] See the June 23, 1972 hearings on the confirmation of Robert L. Yost, excerpted in *Passing By*, pp.35-37.

[69] *Ibid.*, p.27.

[70] *Ibid.*, pp.13-17

[71] *Ibid.*, pp.17-19, 31-33.

[72] *Ibid.*, p.24.

[73] *Ibid.*, p.26.

[74] Authorities agree that estimates of totals killed are not based on hard information and may never be. The "best guess" of the Cornell Modern Indonesian project is 250,000. Jacques Decornoy, a well informed journalist specializing in Southeast Asia, estimates "at least 500,000." *Le Monde* (November 11, 1972). Former Prime Minister of Australia Harold Holt suggested 500,000 to a million (see note 85). Malcolm Caldwell says that "certainly" several hundred thousand were summarily executed, and "perhaps as many as a million." *Indonesia*, Oxford (1968), p.113.

[75] "Indonesian Communism Since the 1965 Coup," *Pacific Affairs*, (Spring 1970), p. 3~36.

[76] *Ibid.*, p.52.

[77] An amnesty report of early March 1973 estimates over 55,000 untried political prisoners in Indonesia, many casually arrested and unable to obtain even a definition of grounds for their detention. Neal Ascherson, "55,000 Held Without Trial in Indonesia," *The Observer*, London (March 18, 1973).

[78] *Op cit.*, p.56.

[79] Jacques Decornoy, "Des dizaines de milliers de personnes sont internees sans grand espoir d'etre jugees un jour," *Le Monde* (November 11, 1972).

[80] Robert Walker, "Indonesia Assures U.S. on Investments," *New York Times* (July 9, 1970).

[81] Philip Shabecoff, "Times are Hard but the Indonesians Have Hopes," *New York Times* (May 29, 1970). See also, "Suharto Aide is Accused of Stealing Funds," (AP), *Philadelphia Inquirer* (July 19, 1970).

[82] According to a study by Joel Rocamora, 'Political Prisoners and the Army Regime in Indonesia,' Cornell University (June 1970), p.1.

[83] *New York Times* (November 30, 1966).

[84] These moderate scholars not only use a double standard - with violence in the interest of opposition to social change justified by a set of nationalistic rationalizations - they also show themselves to be incompetent scholars, or propagandists, or both. As described below, the U.S.-Diem forces always gave violence a higher priority on the spectrum of means for effecting or opposing change than did the NLF, and up until 1960 the NLF used minimal violence. They were not "committed to the thesis that violence was the best means of effecting change"; but Diem and his advisors never were able to make a serious and sustained effort at any course other than counterrevolutionary violence.

[85] *New York Times* (July 6, 1966).

[86] U.S. News and World Report (November 27, 1972), p.24.

[87] General "Jake" Smith. Cited in Teodoro A. Agoncillo and Oscar M. Alfonso, *History of the Filipino People*, Malaya Books, 1967, p.272.

[88] Cited by Jonathan Fast, "Crisis in the Philippines," *New Left Review* (March/April 1973), p.75, from Moorfield Storey and Julian Codman, *Secretary Root's Records: Marked Seventies in Philippine Warfare*, Chicago (1902), pp. 116, 71-73. For similar observations from U.S. War Department records, see Chomsky, *American Power and the New Mandarins*, Pantheon, (1969), Chapter 3, pp.252-3.

[89] Justus M. van der Kroef, "Communism and Reform in the Philippines," *Pacific Affairs* (Spring 1973), p.31.

[90] Fast, op. cit., pp.85-86.

[91] "Real wage rates of Philippine skilled workers dropped (1955 is 100) from 89.2 in 1969 to 74.9 at the end of the first half of 1971; the rates for unskilled workers fell in the same period from 100.0 to 90.4." Van der Kroef, op cit.,

[92] Ibid.

[93.] Van der Kroef's summary of one of the findings of the 1970 Agbayani House Sub-Committee Report, *Ibid.*, p. 39

[94] The only functioning press is principally owned by Marcos and his family and associates. *Ibid.*, p.58.

[95] *Ibid.*, p.30.

[96] *Ibid.*, pp.52-53.

[97] Far Eastern Economic Review (August 5,1972), p.13; cited by van der Kroef, *op. cit.*, p.51.

[98] *Ibid.*, p.51-52.

[99] Geoffrey Arlin, "The Organisers," Far Eastern Economic Review (July 2,1973), p.16.

[100] Walton has now been reassigned to Iran, "his capacity there being what it was in Saigon and Manila: the creation and strengthening of the civil police in order to 'protect' the people from any anti-Government movements." *Ibid.*

[101] *Ibid.*

[102] *Ibid.*

[103] *Ibid.*, p.20.

[104] Tad Szulc, "The Moveable War," *New Republic* (May 12,1973).

[105] "Another Senate Test," *New York Times* (July 9,1973).

[106] For some details, see Chomsky, *At War with Asia*, Pantheon (1970), Chapter 4, and *For Reasons of State*, Pantheon (1973), Chapter 2 and references cited there. For a Laotian view, see Fred Branfman, ed., *Voices from the Plain of Jars*, Harper (1972).

[107] *op. cit.*, p.16.

[108] Phillip Devillers, *Histoire du Vietnam*, Seuil (1952), p.337.

[109] "The Problem of Democracy in Vietnam," *The World Today* (February 1960), p.73.

[110] See section 4 of this Module, "Accelerating Bloodbaths in South Vietnam."

[111] Jean Lacouture, *Vietnam: Between Two Truces*, Vintage (1966), p.29.

[112] David Hotham, in Richard Lindholm, ed., *Vietnam: The First Five Years*, Michigan State (1959), p.359.

[113] J. J. Zasloff, *Origins of the Insurgency in South Vietnam, 1954-1960: The Role of the Southern Vietminh Cadres*, Rand (March 1967), p.11.

[114] Ibid., pp.12-13.

[115] "Losung fur Vietnam," *Neues Forum* (AugustiSeptember 1966), p.459 (present authors' translation).

[116] Op. cit., p.197.

[117] *Pentagon Papers*, Gravel ed., v. I, p.259.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Ibid., p.254.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Ibid., p.255.

[122] Ibid., p.243.

[123] For further discussion of the peace agreements, see Chomsky, "Engame: the Tactic of Peace in Vietnam," *Ramparts* (April 1973), and "Indochina and the Fourth Estate," *Social Policy* (forthcoming).

[124] The problem was seen to be, in part, the "tremendous sense of dependence on the U.S." of countries like the Philippines and South Korea. *National Security Council Working Group Project-Courses of Action, Southeast Asia* (November 10,1964), *Pentagon Papers*, Gravel ed., Beacon v.1, p.627.

[125] In the State Department's view, "a fundamental source of danger we face in the Far East derives from Commu- nist China's rate of economic growth which will probably continue to outstrip that of free Asian countries, with the possible exception of Japan." (DOD, bk. 10, p.1198.) The Department urged that we do what we can to retard the progress of Asian Communist states. The assault on North Vietnam and rural South Vietnam certainly contributes to that end.

[126] The NSC Working Group Project says that "In South Korea, there is... some discouragement at the failure to make as much progress politically and economically as North Korea (from a much more favorable initial position) has made." Op. cit.; see note 124.

[127] An intelligence estimate of 1959 concluded that "development will lag behind that in the North, and the GVN will continue to rely heavily upon US support..." In the North, while life is "grim and regimented... the national effort is concentrated on building for the future." (DOD, bk. 10, pp.1191-1193.) In essence, this forecast proved to be correct. See the quotes from Kellen, note 16 and text.

[128] Revised Bundy/McNaughton Draft of November 21, 1964, Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v.111, p.661.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Dean Acheson, *Present at the Creation*, Norton (1969), p.219.

[131] See NSC Working Group on Vietnam, Sec. 1: Intelligence Assessment: The Situation in Vietnam, November 24, 1964, Doc. 240, Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v.111, pp.651-6.

[132] In an unpublished and untitled memorandum on pacification problems circulated within the military in 1965, a copy of which was given by Vann to Professor Alex Carey, University of New South Wales, Australia.

[133] For the intellectual backup of a policy of semi-genocide, see., Charles Wolf, Jr., *United States Policy and the Third World*, Little, Brown (1967).

[134] The Saigon government, of course, has in no sense represented the rural masses being pacified-in fact, its collaboration in the terror, and its assumed interest in its own people as the western-recognized legitimate government of South Vietnam, played an important part in giving pacification whatever aura of acceptability it had, and keeping the lid of silence on details. In matters like My Lai the Saigon authorities have been as eager to deny and suppress as the American command.

[135] See Littauer and Uphoff, eds., *The Air War in Indochina*, Cornell (1971), p.62.

[136] Ibid., p.55.

[137] Michael J. Uhi, *U.S. Assistance Programs* [1971], p.315.

[138] Quoted in Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., *The Bitter Heritage*, Houghton Mifflin, (1967), p.47.

[139] Indochina Resource Center, "A Statistical Fact Sheet on the Indochina War" (September 27, 1972).

[140] *The Air War in Indochina*, p.63.

[141] See, for example, Herman, *Atrocities in Vietnam: Myths and Realities*, Pilgrim (1970), Chapter 3; Hersh, *MyLai 4*, Random House (1971); Katsuichi Honda, *Vietnam War: A Report Through Asian Eyes*, Mirai-sha (1972); Jonathan Schell, *The Military Half: An Account of Destruction in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin*, Vintage (1968); Kunen, *Standard Operating Procedure*, Avon (1971).

[142] "Pacification's Deadly Price," *Newsweek* (June 19, 1972), pp.42-43.

[143] Cordon S. Livingston, "Letter from a Vietnam Veteran," *Saturday Review* (September 20, 1969).

[144] Robert M. Smith, "Vietnam Killings Laid to Koreans," New York Times (January 10, 1970).

[145] Craig Whitney of the New York Times, who was given extensive documentation on South Korean murders by Diane and Michael Jones, summarized their findings briefly toward the end of an article focusing on the future role of the South Koreans in Vietnam. Toward the beginning of his article, Whitney states that "They [the South Koreans] have been providing a military shield [Whitney does not say to whom] in a poorly defended section of the central coast ("Korean Troops End Vietnam Combat Role," New York Times (November 9, 1972).

[146] See "'Pacification' by Calculated Frightfulness: The Testimony of Diane and Michael Jones on the Massacres of South Vietnamese Civilians by South Korean Mercenary Troops," Pacification Monograph Number 2; Edited with an Introduction by Edward S. Herman, Philadelphia, Pa. (1973).

[147] A very large number of South Korean murders were "random" in the sense of not being attributable to any going military actions.

[148] A Rand Corporation study of 1966 "Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Study" which gave documentary evidence of indiscriminate South Korean murders of civilians, was classified and suppressed by Rand and DOD. See American Report (July 28, 1972).

[149] Letter in the New York Times (January 25, 1970).

[150] "Security" is another Orwellism as consistently applied to Vietnam by official spokesmen for the United States. They use it to mean unthreatened control by the Saigon government. If Saigon controls by sheer force and violence—often the case—the people and hamlet are "secure"; if the NLF controls without force, the hamlet and its people are "insecure." A National Intelligence Estimate of June 1953 gloomily discussed the inability of the French Union forces "to provide security for the Vietnamese population," who warned the guerrillas of the presence of French Union forces, thus permitting them to take cover. In short, popular support for the Vietminh made it difficult for France to provide security for the population from the Vietminh. The Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v.1, p.396.

[151] The same tendencies quickly manifested themselves in the Australian "pacification" effort. See esp. the documentation in Alex Carey, "Australian Atrocities in Vietnam," Sydney, N.S.W. (1968), 22 pp.

[152] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.183.

[153] An earlier predecessor was the "counter-terror," or "CT" program organized by the CIA in the mid-1960s to use assassination and other forms of terror against the NLF leadership and cadres. See Wayne Cooper, "Operation Phoenix: A Vietnam Fiasco Seen From Within," Washington Post (June 8, 1972).

[154] Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v.11, pp.429, 585.

[155] Ibid., pp.503-504.

[156] Ibid., v. IV, p.578.

[157] Richard S. Winslow, a former AID employee, pointed out that Phoenix program language at one time spoke of the "elimination" of VCI. "Elimination,' however, gave the unfortunate impression to some Congressmen and to the interested public that someone was being 'eliminated.' Now the major goal is 'neutralization' of the VCI. Of course, the same proportion of VCI are being killed. . . . But Congress seems mollified now that suspected Vietcong are neutralized,' rather than 'eliminated.'" U.S. Assistance Programs, p.244.

[158] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.183.

[159] Ministry of Information, Vietnam 1967-1971, Toward Peace and Prosperity, p.52.

[160] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.207.

[161] Ibid., pp.184, 225.

[162] Ibid., p.183.

[163] Ibid., p.212.

[164] Ibid., p.186.

[165] For Robert Komer, writing in April 1967, the problem is' that "we are just not getting enough payoff yet from the massive intelligence we are increasingly collecting. Policemilitary coordination is sadly lacking both in collection and in swift reaction." Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v~ IV, p.441.

[166] Pentagon Papers, Gravel ed., v.11, p.407, referring to the officials of Bien Hoa Province.

[167] See Jon Cooper, "Operation Phoenix," Department of History, Dartmouth (1971), mimeographed. The informant is Don Luce.

[168] U.s. Assistance Programs, p.314.

[169] New York Times (August 13,1972).

[170] Washington Post (February 17,1970).

[171] U.5, Assistance Programs, p.314.

[172] Dispatch News Service International, #376 (July 6,1972).

[173] u.s. Assistance Programs, p.321.

[174] Ibid., p.252.

[175,] Ibid., p.314.

[176] Ibid., pp.314-315.

[177] Ibid., p.321.

[178] Ibid., p.252.

[179] UPI, Le Monde (November 5,1971); see further citations in Chomsky, For Reasons of State (1973), p.92.

[180] For a discussion of the 1967 attack on Dak Son and this general issue, see Herman, Atrocities in Vietnam, pp. 46-54.

[181] The quote is from a captured Communist document dated March 1960, cited at length in Race, op. cit., pp. 116-119. The specific quote is on p.119.

[182] Douglas Pike, Vietcong, Massachusetts Institute of Technology (1966), pp.91-92.

[183] Ibid., p.101.

[184] Race, op. cit., p.184.

[185] Law 10/59 initiated a system of military courts that, within three days of a charge, were to sentence to death "whoever commits or attempts to commit... crimes with the aim of sabotage, or of infringing upon the security of the State" (Article 1) as well as "whoever belongs to an organization designed to help to prepare or to perpetrate [these] crimes" (Article 3). This law made all dissent and opposition subversive and punishable by death.

[186] Op. cit., pp.196-197. Emphasis added.

[187] Ibid., pp.188-189, note 25.

[188] Ibid., p.200. It is interesting to note that after talking with the Saigon leadership in 1965, James Reston wrote: "Even Premier Ky told this reporter today that the communists were closer to the people's yearnings for social 1u185ti;1e and an independent life than his own government." New York Times (September 1,1965). Race, op. cit., p.200.

[190] These reports reached flood proportions during the DRV offensive of 1972, with the New York Times con- tributing its share in the writing of Joseph Treaster and Fox Butterfield. Their reports, heavily dependent on official handouts of Saigon and U.S. information officers, do not withstand close scrutiny. See Tom Fox, "The Binh Dinh 'Massacre'," American Report (September 15,1972); Le Monde, May 28-29,1972 (report of interviews with refugees by an AFP special correspondent). See also note 221, below.

[191] This system of responsiveness extends into the military sphere, helping to explain the "astonishing" fighting capacity and "almost incredibly resilient morale" of DRV soldiers, who benefit from a system of "morale restitution. designed to lend great emotional and physical support to its members," a system which "anticipates and alleviates possible future morale troubles." Kellen, op. cit., p.9. 192]In R. N. Pfeffer, ed., *No More Vietnams?*, Harper and Row (1968), p.227.

[193] Race, op. cit., pp.182-183, note 22.

[194] Diane Johnstone, "'Communist Bloodbath' in North Vietnam is Propaganda Myth, says former Saigon Psychological Warfare Chief," St. Louis Post-Dispatch (September 24,1972).

[195] The analysis that follows is based on D. Gareth Porter, *The Myth of the Bloodbath: North Vietnam's Land Reform Reconsidered*, International Relations of East Asia, Interim Report No.2, Cornell (1972).

[196] Ibid., pp.26-28.

[197] Ibid., pp.44-45.

[198] "Figure on N. Vietnam's Killing 'Just a Guess,' Author Says," *The Washington Post* (September 13,1972).

[199] Late 1954 was also a period of famine in much of North Vietnam, affecting the very area in which Chi had lived, which further compromises his inferences drawn from a count of village deaths by starvation.

[200] *Fire in the Lake*, Little, Brown, 1972, p.223. FitzGerald gives no footnote reference for this "conservative estimate," but she relies heavily on Fall and her language here is similar to his.

[201] Michael Harrington writes that he and other "socialist cadre . . . knew that Ho and his comrades had killed thousands of peasants during forced collectivization in North Vietnam during the 'SOs (a fact they themselves had confessed). *Dissent* (Spring 1973). In fact, the only known "confessions" are the fabrications that had been exposed many months earlier, and neither Harrington nor other western observers "know" what took place during the land reform. U.S. government propagandists can rest unperturbed, despite the exposures of earlier fabrications.

[202] Porter, Op. cit., p.55.

[203] Stewart Harris, *London Times* (March 27,1968).

[204] *Fire in the Lake*, op. cit., pp.174-175.

[205] *New York Times*, Op. Ed. (June 15,1972). In his book, *No Exit Prom Vietnam* (McKay, Updated Edition (1970), Thompson says that "Normally Communist

behavior toward the mass of the population is irreproachable and the use of terror is highly selective" (p.40); but that work, while biased, involved some effort at understanding and contained a residue of integrity, entirely absent in the New York Times piece.

[206] D. Gareth Porter, "Hue: A Study in Political Warfare" (undated) as yet unpublished.

[207] Ibid., pp.9-14.

[208] Ibid., p.6.

[209] Ibid., pp.10-11.

[210] Ibid., p.12.

[211] Quoted in Townsend Hoopes, *The Limits of Intervention*, McKay (1969), p.142.

[212] Ibid., pp. 141-2.

[213] M. Riboud, in *Le Monde* (April 13,1968).

[214] Ibid.

[215] Interview with Mr. Tony Zangrilli (February 2,1973).

[216] Alje Vennema, *The Tragedy of Hue*, unpublished; quoted by Porter, op. cit., pp. 22-23.

[217] Oriana Fallaci, "Working Up to Killing," *The Washington Monthly* (February 1972), p.40.

[218] "Vietnam: The Bloodbath Argument," *Christian Century* (November 5,1969).

[219] Ibid.

[220] Katsuichi Honda, *Vietnam War: A Report Through Asian Eyes*, pp.55-69.

[221] Martin Teitel, Hearings before the Subcommittee to Investigate Problems Connected with Refugees and Escapees, Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. Senate, 92d Congress, second session (May 8,1972), p.17 (Kennedy Sub- committee); "Again, the suffering of My Lai," *New York Times* (June 7,1972). In the same Senate Hearings Teitel reports other instances of terrorism attributed to the NLF but apparently carried out by ARVN, and gives a brief resume of U.S. Operation BOLD MARINER in the Batangan Peninsula, in which the entire population of the peninsula was forcibly moved to a sandpit near Quang Ngai city, the land levelled by artillery and bombs and finally destroyed by Rome Plows, dikes destroyed by bombardment so that rice cannot be grown, and the people placed in semi-starvation conditions.

[222] Patrice De Beer, "Le traitement des prisonniers politique par Saigon paraît peu conforme aux accords du 27 janvier," *Le Monde* (March 16, 1973). See also, *After the Signing of the Paris Agreements, Documents on South Viet-nam's Political Prisoners*, Narmic-VRC (June 1973), p.27.

[223] For extensive documentation on this point, see esp.: *Ibid.*; *A Cry of Alarm, New Revelations on Repression and Deportations in South Vietnam, Saigon* (1972); Jean-Pierre Debris and Andre Menras, *Rescapes des bagne de Saigon, nous accusons* (1973); *The Forgotten Prisoners of Ngu yen Van Thieu*, Paris (May 1973); Holmes Brown and Don Luce, *Hostages of War, Saigon's Political Prisoners* (1973); Pham Tam, *Imprisonment and Torture in South Vietnam, FOR* (un-dated); *Prisonniers Politiques au Sud Vietnam, Listes de Prisonniers, Appel des 30 Mouvements*, Saigon (February 1973).

[224] Quoted in Brown and Luce, *op. cit.*, p.14.

[225] *Ibid.*, p.15.

[226] *Ibid.*, p.32.

[227] Quaker Team in Quang Ngai Province, "To Report Truthfully on the Treatment of Prisoners in 1972."

[228] After the Signing (see note 222 above), p.32.

[229] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.314.

[230] After the Signing, p. 27.

[231] *Ibid.*, pp.26-27.

[232] Jane and David Barton, "Indochina-Quang Ngai Province Five Months After the Peace Agreement." (June 20, 1973). (Appended to this Module.)

[233] After the Signing, p.33.

[234] *Ibid.*, pp.33-34.

[235] See note 27 above.

[236] In the broadest sense, the long U.S. intervention has been the only reason that a Thieu-type regime could exist in the first place.

[237] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.5.

[238] GAO Report (July 1972), p.42.

[239] U.S. Assistance Programs, p.197.

[240] Ibid., p.224.

[241] Ibid., p.96.

[242] Ibid., pp.177,179. Our emphasis.

[243] AID, Fiscal 1971 Program and Project Data Presentation to Congress; cited by Michael T. Kiare, "America's Global Police," American Report, Sept. 15,1972.

[244] Quoted in Brown and Luce, op. cit., pp. 62-63.

[245] See note 24 above.

[246] U.S. Assistance Programs, pp. 186ff. One illustration of "improvement" cited by WiUjam Colby was that confes- sions obtained during "interrogations," which 'used to be used exclusively... are not used exclusively any more. p .197.

[247] Quoted in Brown and Luce, op. cit., p. 32.

[248] Ibid., p.36.

[249] Ibid., p. Ill.

[250] AP report (November 1,1972).

[251] On October 12,1972, Thieu stated that "The people and the army will not permit to live for more than five minutes" anybody advocating a coalition government. On October 24 he announced that all undesirable elements in South Vietnam would be exterminated. See The Forgotten Prisoners, p. 41.

[252] This and other edicts are available in Alter the Signing, p.22.

[253] New York Times (November 23,1972); Vietnam News (March 6,1973). The latter, put out by the DRV, claims that Saigon had long since worked out a "Security Plan 1971," to be put into effect in case of a bilateral solution bet- ween the U.S. and PRG and DRV, that, in the event of a cease fire, would use "suitable measures" to neutralize dangerous political prisoners.

[254] Laurence Stern, Washington Post (November 30,1972).

[255] Zasloff, op. cit., note 113, p.13.

[256] Michael Field, The Prevailing Wind: Witness in Indo-China, Methuen, (1965), p.210.

[257] "M.Thieu... appliquons la lois des cowboys," Le Monde (January 27,1973).

[258] Boston Globe (June 24,1972).

[259] San Francisco Chronicle (June 4,1972).

[260] This document appeared in *Le Monde* (May 17,1973).

[261] Chris Jenkins, "Thieu's Campaign of Terror," *American Report* (January 29, 1973); letter of the Committee Campaigning for the Improvement of the Prison System of South Vietnam (December 9,1972); *After the Signing*, pp. 35ff.

[262] Sylvan Fox, "Saigon Bypasses Accord by Freeing Many Prisoners," *New York Times* (February 6,1973).

[263] The press also failed to note the suspiciousness of the huge number (40,000) allegedly being released, and the illogic in the contention that the political component, numbering a huge 10,000 had "renounced Communism." (All at once? If not, why were they held to this point?)

[264] *Prison News* of the Committee Campaigning for the Improvement of the Prison System of South Vie~am (December 14,1972).

[265] *Prison News* (December 9,1972).

[266] Ngo Vinh Long, "Thieu starving refugees to keep the throne," *Boston Phoenix*, (Dec. 12,1972), citing South Vietnamese *NewsIsSP er* reports.

[267] *Prison* December 9,1972); *After the Signing*, pp. 35ff.

[268] *Le JAonde* (January 3,1973).

[269] *Ibid.*

[270] *New York Times* (January 27,1973).